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ABSTRACT

This volume is a reproduction of summaries by the American Newspaper Publishers Association Foundation (ANPAF) designed to put to the test of public response some of the various components which go into making a newspaper, including headline and type size, the use of captions, and story location. The main purpose is to supply data which editors can use in making their own judgments, but an effort is made not to tell editors how to edit. Of the 74 summaries in this volume, 39 represent research done in the universities, 6 were sponsored by the ANPAF, 21 represent research done by individual newspapers, and 8 represent research done by others. The studies are arranged under the following chapter headings: "How and When the Newspaper Is Read," "Some Audience Characteristics," "Readership," "Readership by Teenagers," "Some Communication Behavior," "Typography," "Headlines," "News and Editorial Policy," "Free Press and Fair Trial," and "Miscellaneous." (RB)

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NEWS RESEARCH FOR
BETTER NEWSPAPERS
VOLUME 2

Compiled and edited by

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750 Third Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10017

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FOREWORD

This book is dedicated to the many people who are devoting their energies to advancing the excellence and progress of the daily newspaper.

Like its predecessor in 1966, Volume II of "News Research for Better Newspapers" is designed to put to the test of public response some of the various components which go into making a newspaper — from type size to Sunday comics and peoples' reading habits, likes or dislikes.

The American Newspaper Publishers Association since 1964 has undertaken the financing and developing of a news research program (of which the present book is an outgrowth) aimed at improving the writing and presentation of news. A News Research Center Steering Committee was appointed to guide it, including in its membership: ANPA, the Associated Press Managing Editors Association, United Press International, American Society of Newspaper Editors, National Newspaper Promotion Association, Bureau of Advertising of the ANPA, and the Association for Education in Journalism. The success of Volume I is indicated by the sale of several thousand copies, hopefully in good use, and the letters of response from many newspaper people.

In charge of the project is Dr. Chilton R. Bush, former executive head of the Department of Journalism at Stanford University. Dr. Bush has been a consultant for several California newspapers and has made many research studies for newspapers in various parts of the country.

This book is published and distributed by the ANPA Foundation, a non-profit organization established to look beyond newspaper problems and plan for the future of the daily newspaper.

We hope this book will stimulate its readers to probe further into the field of news research as a tool in editorial decision-making.

STANFORD SMITH
General Manager

American Newspaper Publishers Association Foundation

750 Third Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10017

February 1967

INTRODUCTION

The very high utilization of the research findings in "News Research for Better Newspapers," published a year ago, has prompted the publication of Volume 2.

Like the first volume, Volume 2 is a reproduction of summaries published in 30 News Research Bulletins and assembled under appropriate chapter headings. The chapter headings differ slightly from those in Volume 1 because the subject matter reported in 1966 was somewhat different.

When similar subject matter was reported in Volume 1, it is mentioned in a note at the beginning of such chapters of Volume 2 so that readers will know about all of the research in each area that has been reported since establishment of the News Research Center in September, 1964.

A considerable effort is made in the bulletins not to tell editors how to edit. The main purpose is to supply data which editors can use for making their own judgments.

Of the 74 summaries in this volume, 39 (53.5%) represent research done in the universities; six were sponsored by the ANPA; 21 represent research done by individual newspapers; and eight represent research done by others.

Chilton R. Bush

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Chapter 1

HOW AND WHEN THE NEWSPAPER IS READ

For summaries of previous research about the subject matter of this chapter, see "News Research For Better Newspapers," (1966), pages 10-20.

Position of the Editorial Page

An ANPA-sponsored study suggests that the reader has a different mental set when he reads opinion and when he reads news; and that, for many papers, the location of the opinion page does not correspond to the reader's psychological need.

The web perfecting press did not become available as standard equipment until after 1871 and few newspapers had one until the 'eighties. Prior to that time, one side of a sheet was printed first (pp. 2, 3, 6 and 7) and then on the reverse side pages 1, 4, 5 and 8 were run off. On the turned sheets were usually late news, late ads and editorials.

The editorial page of Horace Greeley's New York Tribune, for example, was on page 4. This practice accommodated the felt need of Greeley and his contemporary editors, who valued editorial comment highly, and gave them the advantage of a later deadline.

But those editors never thought of making an accommodation to the readers' psychological needs. Such an accommodation wasn't necessary with an 8-page paper.

It is doubtful that since Greeley's time—although newspapers have increased in size—newspaper executives have given much thought to the proper position of the editorial page, although some Hearst papers and the Christian Science Monitor around the turn of the century placed it on the last page.

We can hypothesize that the reader has a different mental set when he reads news and when he reads opinion. When he reads news he is making a rapid surveillance of his environment to find out what has happened since yesterday or since this morning.

But when he reads opinion the reader makes a different original commitment of his attention. Since he has a more affirmative purpose he prepares himself to read more slowly and, perhaps, more thoughtfully. He reads news and opinion under different conditions.

An Experiment

Dr. Galen Rarick, of the University of Oregon School of Journalism, tested this hypothesis last July in a study sponsored jointly by ANPA and the Salem (Ore.) Capital Journal.

A sample of 673 adult readers of the Capital Journal was asked this question:

"When you come to the editorial page, as you are reading the newspaper, do you usually stop and read something on it immediately, or do you go through all or most of the paper and then turn back to the editorial page to read it? Or do you not read the editorial page at all?"

The editorial page was page 4 in the 28-page paper in four sections.

The responses of all readers were as follows:

	Men	Women
Read it immediately	59.3%	60.1%
Pass it and come back to it.........	30.0	30.0
Don't read it and not answered......	5.0	6.4
Other response	5.7	6.4
	100.0	100.0

Those who said they passed by the editorial page and then came back to it were asked why they did that. Some of the typical reasons given were these:

"I read current news first, then philosophy and theory."

"It takes longer and more concentration to read editorials."

"Because it is more thoughtful reading, and I like to take time."

"I come back to study."

The data seem to show that (1) 30% of all readers do not permit the location of the editorial page at page 4 to interrupt their surveillance of their environment, and (2) 60% are compelled to shift from one mental set to another and then to shift again.

Do the data tell us the proper location of the editorial page? It is not possible to say positively, for readers of most papers have been conditioned to the present location. Perhaps the editorial page would be read more thoroughly and thoughtfully if its location were as far back in the paper as the controlling factors permit.

"Reading for Relaxation" Page

The Harrisburg (Pa.) Patriot has a "Reading for Relaxation" page. It carries syndicated columns by Louis Sobol, Earl Wilson, Walter Winchell and others, a few humor panels, an animal picture feature, "Today's Highlight in History" and the cross-word puzzle. The page is usually 8, 10 or 11.

How Readers Go Through One Morning Newspaper

by Robert D. Coursen, Research Manager
Minneapolis Star and Tribune Company

Three main styles of reading a newspaper were recorded in conjunction with a statewide readership survey of the Minneapolis Tribune for Thursday morning, November 18, 1965.

The most popular approach was to start reading at a particular location. Half of the readers directed their attention to some specific area of which news, sports, comics, women's section, and Ann Landers were the leading attractions.

Three out of every 10 readers took a page-by-page tour of the Tribune on a casual basis, scanning material of interest as they went through the paper.

About one-sixth of the readers read their Tribunes thoroughly, page-by-page.

Interesting differences in the reading habits of men and women were revealed in the survey data. Men were more likely to turn immediately to news or the sport pages. Many women enjoyed going through the newspaper page-by-page scanning items of interest.

The questions and answers:

"How did you go about reading Thursday's Tribune? Did you go through page by page or did you turn to some specific item right away? (If 'page by page') In going through the paper page by page are you more likely to scan it or to read it quite thoroughly?"

	All adults	**Men**	**Women**
Turned to a specific item	49%	58%	42%
Page by page and scanned	30	22	37
Page by page and read thoroughly	17	16	17
Page by page and gave other answers	3	3	3
Other answers	1	1	1
	100%	100%	100%

Each person who read a specific item was asked: "What specific item did you first turn to?"

	All adults	**Men**	**Women**
News; front page; local news	18%	20%	17%
Sports section	13	28	1
Comics	6	5	6
Women's section	4	—	7
Ann Landers	4	1	6
Financial section, stock markets; business news	3	4	2
Editorial page	2	1	3
Will Jones	1	2	—
Mr. Fixit	1	2	—
Weather forecast	*	—	*
Almanac	*	—	*
Entertainment; TV section	*	*	—
Other answers	3	1	6
(*Less than one-half of one per cent)	55%	64%	48%

All percentages reported here are based on the total sample which was 439 readers overall; 193 were men and 246 were women, 18 years of age or over.

(**Ed. Note**: For previous reports on how the newspaper is read, see Chapter 1 of "News Research for Better Newspapers", 1966.)

How People Read Jumps

The Minneapolis Tribune conducted a statewide readership study of the metropolitan and state editions of the issue of Thursday, Nov. 18, 1965.

In the metro or state editions nine stories were jumped from the front page to inside pages. The average readership of the nine front page stories was 49%—ranging from 27% for one story to 75% for another. The average readership of the jumped stories on inside pages was 27%.

Readers were asked this question, among others: "A jump article in a newspaper is one that is continued to another page. Some readers stop reading these articles when they have to turn the page. Others like to read them all the way to the end. Do you have any set ways of reading jump articles? (If Yes) How do you go about reading jump articles?"

The answers were as follows:

	All Adults	Men	Women
Yes, special way	85%	80%	90%
No	14	19	10
Other answers	1	1	—
	100	100	100
Finish article immediately	48	44	51
Depends on the story	22	20	23
Read rest when I come to it	10	9	11
Finish it if I'm interested; otherwise I wait	4	5	4
Other answers	2	2	2
	86	80	91

(Multiple answers are included in the table)

When readers next were asked, "Why do you suppose newspapers have jump articles?" the answers for all adults were as follows:

Not enough room on first page for all important articles	74%
Directs attention to inside pages, gets people interested in other pages	25
Other answers	1
Don't know	6
	106

(Multiple answers are included in the table)

One of the foregoing responses could be questioned: "Directs attention to inside pages, gets people interested in other pages." The reverse can be postulated for some situations, as when a long jump takes up most of the newshole on a page; it could cause some readers to skip the whole page, thus missing the ads on the page. Neither of these hypotheses has been tested.

When Morning Paper is Read

When the Minneapolis Morning Tribune made a statewide study of its readers in November 1965, it found that 81% of the women had "first started to read" the paper before noon but only 72% of the men had done so.

About one-half of the readers did all of their reading at one sitting and about one-half returned to the paper to do more reading.

There were also considerable differences between metropolitan and state edition readers. Whereas 71% of the metropolitan readers started to read the paper before 9 a.m., only 59% of state edition readers had done so. (Only 79% of state edition readers received the paper by carrier delivery as compared with 96% for metropolitan readers.)

The times of day when readers first started to read the Tribune were as follows:

	State	Metrop.
Before 6 a.m.	1%	1%
6-8:59 a.m.	58	70
9-11:59 a.m.	15	13
12-2:59 p.m.	14	5
3-3:59 p.m.	3	4
6-8:59 p.m.	8	5
9-midnight	1	2
	100%	100%

Time Spent Reading

In a survey of 1,640 adults and teenagers in Nebraska and western Iowa in the summer of 1965, the Omaha World-Herald asked the respondents how much time they spent reading that newspaper. Readers in the City Zone (Omaha and Council Bluffs, Iowa) estimated the average number of minutes as follows:

Men	40
Women	39
Teenagers	21

The breakdown of the responses was as follows:

	Men	Women	Teenagers
15 mins. or less	7.0%	8.3%	29.3%
30 mins.	27.9	27.4	34.6
More than 30 mins.	63.9	62.6	24.2
Not answered	1.2	1.7	11.9
	100.0	100.0	100.0

The average number of minutes spent by readers in twenty cities outside the City Zone was as follows:

Men	37
Women	38
Teenagers	20

The Wall Street Journal recently asked a large national sample of readers how much time they spent reading that newspaper. The average (median) number of minutes was 38.2.

Chapter 2

SOME AUDIENCE CHARACTERISTICS

For summaries of previous research about the subject matter of this chapter, see "News Research For Better Newspapers," (1966), pages 21-34.

How Much Interest in Culture?

Roper found that 10% of the adult population is "culturally active."

According to Berelson, the average adult spends four hours a month "in the presence of culture", 4½% of his total leisure time.

Samuelson and others show that some of the time for media use by the higher educated man is preempted by other activities; the lesser educated man, however, has less competition for his time.

Elmo Roper recently asked a national sample of adults to specify (from a list) those subjects in which they had "a good deal of interest."

The results, for the whole population and for those who had attended college, are in Table 1.

TABLE 1

	Whole Population	**Attended College**
Religion	49%	49%
Sports	47	53
Music	46	56
Politics and gov't	40	59
International affairs	37	60
Cooking	36	31
Home decoration	35	36
History	22	37
Science	20	36
Literature	19	39
Art	13	31

Roper also developed an index of "cultural activity" from the responses to a scale of questions (i.e., readership of news magazines; of magazines with intellectual content; regular readership of two or more newspapers; readership of books "to advance knowledge," interest in art, literature, etc.).

He classified adults by their scores on the index. The results were as follows:

Culturally inert	51%
Fairly inactive	26
Fairly active	13
Culturally active	10

Roper broke down the "culturally actives" by education as follows:

Grade school	1%
High school	4
Some college	26
College graduate	62
Not answered	7

Bernard Berelson computed the approximate number of hours per month an adult spends "in the presence of culture."

He used various sources of data on thirteen different kinds of cultural activities, such as attendance figures for films and newspaper readership, etc.

For each kind of activity, he adopted a high criterion: to qualify as culture each kind of content "would presumably have to be given serious attention as part of a liberal education in a good college." For example, 90% of the rental films exhibited in 1962 were excluded as were 85% of the courses offered in adult education. (He calculated that only 1% of the total time spent on newspapers would qualify; that is, time spent on Lippmann's column, art, literary and music criticism, etc.)

Berelson does not claim that his figures are precisely correct.

Table 2 shows the approximate number of hours per month spent by adults "in the presence of culture."

TABLE 2

	Thousands of Hours per Month	% of Total (447,000,000)
Commercial TV	96,285	22
Magazines	89,310	20
Books (all sources)	76,172	17
Radio	38,192	8
Records	36,960	8
Musical, artistic, theatrical performing (amateur)	27,500	6
Motion pictures	22,252	5
Educational TV	21,800	5
Adult education	12,750	3
Newspapers	12,000	3
Museums	5,600	1
Concerts	4,250	1
Theater	3,950	1
Total	447,000	100

The average time spent on all of these activities is 4 hours per month. This represents 4½% of the total leisure time of the average adult. Berelson set the total leisure time of an adult at three hours per day.

Berelson also analyzed his findings by education. The breakdowns are shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3

Education	% of Adults in Population	Estimated % Distribution of Culture	Number Hours Per Month	% of Free Time (at 3 hrs. per day)
College grad.	8.5	25	11.75	13.0
Some college	9.5	20	8.0	9.5
H.S. grad.	25.0	25	4.0	4.5
Others	57.0	30	2.0	2.0
Average			4.0	4.5

In the absence of historical data, Berelson says, "it seems almost certain" that the United States today has a higher score on cultural activity than ever before and will have a still higher score a decade hence. His reasoning: attention to culture is strongly tied to educational attainment.

By the same token, he says, the United States probably compares favorably with most foreign countries, "even those with such popular traditions as opera in Italy."

Samuelson, Carter and Ruggels computed correlations between education and time spent by men only on six different kinds of mass media. They adjusted the data, by a part-correlation method, to determine the effect of time preempted by other activities (for example, job-connected hours of work and number of organizations in which respondents were active).

They found that, because the more highly educated man has less time to devote to television, radio and newspapers, he actually spends less time than he would like to spend; whereas "the medium orientation of the less educated man and role demands on his time are at a level that permits their satisfaction with less competition and less mutual displacement."

(Elmo Roper, "How Culturally Active Are Americans?", Saturday Review, May 14, 1966, pp. 22-23; B. Berelson, "In the Presence of Culture," Public Opinion Quarterly, 28: 1-12, 1964; M. Samuelson, R. F. Carter and L. Ruggels, "Education, Available Time, and Use of Mass Media," Journalism Quarterly, 40: 491-496, 1963.)

An Autumn Weekend (1955)

More people read newspapers over the weekend than engage in any other activity.

On Monday, Oct. 3 and Tuesday, Oct. 4, 1955, the University of Minnesota School of Journalism interviewed 243 adult readers of the Minneapolis (Minn.) Star (evening) about their activities on the preceding Saturday and Sunday.

Although the findings are now eleven years old, they have some value for the present. At the time of the survey, for example, 92% of the Star readers owned a TV set, and the average work week was 40 hours.

Table 1 shows, in descending order, the percentage of adults who engaged in each of twenty-nine activities on Saturday and Sunday combined.

Table 2 breaks down the data in Table 1 to show when the respondents engaged in twenty of the activities. Sunday evening was the only period in which more people viewed tv than read a newspaper.

The findings are relevant to the season in which the study was done. They would be somewhat different for winter, spring or summer.

Of those who were employed outside the home full-time or part-time (40% of the total sample), 42% worked on Saturday, Oct. 1 and 26% on Sunday, Oct. 2.

Table 1

	Men	Women
1. Read a newspaper	83%	90%
2. Watched television	79	73
3. Did routine housework	14	94
4. Went to church	48	62
5. Did any shopping at any type of store	43	65
6. Listened to the radio	47	55
7. Just relaxed most of the time, did nothing in particular	53	41
8. Took an automobile ride	38	51
9. Visited friends, neighbors in their home	43	46
10. Played with children	30	52
11. Read a magazine	30	34
12. Entertained friends in home	19	34
13. Worked in yard or garden	23	13
14. Went to work at regular job	30	6
15. Went for a walk	14	15
16. Read a book (other than Bible)	12	11
17. Went to an entertainment spot	9	15
18. Did repair work on house	18	7
19. Played games or sports indoors	9	12
20. Listened to a record-player	9	9
21. Went to a football game	13	3
22. Took part in outdoor sport or game	8	8

(continued on next page)

	Men	Women
23. Spent time on hobby	10 %	6 %
24. Worked on auto—wash or repair	10	2
25. Went to movies	3	4
26. Played a musical instrument	5	2
27. Repaired a home appliance	4	2
28. Did interior decorating in home	3	2
29. Built something in home workshop	2	—

Table 2

	Sat. morn.	Sat. aft.	Sat. eve.	Sun. morn.	Sun. aft.	Sun. eve.
1. Read a newspaper	7%	22%	51%	49%	35%	27%
2. Watched television	5	20	45	7	35	56
3. Read a magazine	2	5	14	6	9	8
4. Listened to radio	19	24	16	20	17	15
5. Did any shopping	23	25	5	2	4	3
6. Visited friends, neighbors	2	8	16	3	23	13
7. Entertained friends in home	1	4	11	2	9	11
8. Played with children	9	16	16	12	28	17
9. Went to work	12	11	7	7	7	4
10. Did routine housework	50	31	22	37	25	21
11. Took an auto ride	4	8	6	7	29	8
12. Spent time on hobby	2	4	2	2	2	2
13. Went to the movies	—	—	2	—	1	2
14. Went to church	2	1	[illegible]	52	2	2
15. Did repair work on house	4	6	4	3	3	1
16. Played games or sports indoors	—	1	7	1	1	3
17. Worked in yard or garden	8	8	2	5	4	2
18. Read a book (other than Bible)	2	2	5	3	3	4
19. Went to some entertainment spot	1	2	7	—	3	2
20. Just relaxed most of the time, did nothing in particular	8	16	21	16	28	28

Who Reads Sunday Comics?

Robinson and White, in 1962, studied readership of comics in the United States. The study was sponsored by the Newspaper Comics Council, Inc., and interviewing was done on a national probability sample of 1,360 adults by Opinion Research Corporation.

One of the findings was that readership of Sunday comics is distributed quite evenly across all occupational categories. The main exceptions are farmers, retired persons and widows. (See Table 1).

TABLE 1

	Every Week	1-3 Times a Month	Occasionally	Seldom, Never
Prof., technical workers	54%	5%	12%	29%
Farmers	26	15	9	50
Mgrs., props., officials	47	10	12	31
Clerical	52	13	8	27
Sales	47	14	12	27
Craftsmen, foremen	49	7	18	26
Operatives	46	12	11	31
Service workers	43	17	6	34
Laborers	43	14	16	27
Unemployed	41	10	10	39
Retired, widows	28	5	14	53

The investigators, however, suspected that there is a widespread belief that comics are read chiefly by persons in the lower occupational levels. So they asked respondents to complete the following sentence: "Of all the occupational groups in our country, I would say that____________ read the comics the most."

Only 365 of the responses could be classified to fit the occupational descriptions in Table 1. An analysis of these responses, however, confirmed the stereotype. (See Table 2).

TABLE 2

Lower occupational categories	54%
Middle occupational categories	12
Upper occupational categories	34

(E. J. Robinson and D. M. White, "Comic Strip Reading in the United States", Report No. 5, Boston University Communications Research Center, August, 1962.)

Readership of Sunday Comics: By Education

Robinson and White, in 1962, studied comics reading in the United States. The study was sponsored by the Newspaper Comics Council, Inc. and interviewing was done on a national probability sample of 1360 adults by Opinion Research Corporation.

One of the findings was that as education increases so does "every week" reading of Sunday comics—up to the college graduate level. Then it declines somewhat. (Table 1).

TABLE 1

	8 Grades	H.S. Grad.	Some College	College Grad.	Grad. School
Every week	37%	52%	53%	41%	38%
2-3 times a week	5	4	4	2	5
Once a month	7	8	2	3	4
Occasionally	14	12	13	14	14
Seldom, never	37	24	28	40	39
	100	100	100	100	100

Respondents were asked to complete the following sentence: "I think reading the comics is ...." The personal reasons given were analyzed by education. (Table 2).

TABLE 2

	1-7 Grades	9-11 Grades	H.S. Grad.	Coll. Grad.	Grad. Work
Positive pleasure	44%	52%	56%	48%	43%
All right for children	20	12	15	14	21
Negative response	12	15	17	27	31
Educational, useful	7	5	4	4	3
Other response	16	16	8	7	2
	99	100	100	100	100

The following responses were classified as "positive pleasure" responses: "enjoyable," "fun," "nice," "relaxing," and "good."

Negative responses included these: "waste of time," "not educational," "not entertaining," "gives people bad ideas," "foolish," "silly," "bad habit," and "juvenile."

(E. J. Robinson and D. M. White "Comic Strip Reading in the United States." Report No. 5, Boston University Communications Research Center, August, 1962)

The Nature of News

Although textbook and other writers have tried to define news, we have needed a theory which explains the psychological processes of news reading. Dr. Wilbur Schramm, who is well-trained in psychology, has developed such a theory. It is reported, in part, below and should have some value for younger members of the editorial staff:

"I think it is self-evident that a person selects news in expectation of a reward.

"This reward may be either of two kinds. One is related to what Freud calls the Pleasure Principle, the other to what he calls the Reality Principle. For want of better names, we shall call these two classes **immediate reward** and **delayed reward.**

"In general, the kinds of news which may be expected to furnish immediate reward are news of crime and corruption, accidents and disasters, sports and recreation, social events, and human interest.

"Delayed reward may be expected from news of public affairs, economic matters, social problems, science, education, and health.

"News of the first kind pays its rewards at once. A reader can enjoy a vicarious experience without any of the dangers or stresses involved. He can shiver luxuriously at an axe murder, shake his head sympathetically and safely at a tornado, identify himself with the winning team or (herself) with the society lady who wore a well-described gown at the reception for Lady Morganbilt, laugh understandingly (and from superior knowledge) at a warm little story of children or dogs.

"News of the second kind, however, pays its rewards later. It sometimes requires the reader to endure unpleasantness or annoyances—as, for example, when he reads of the ominous foreign situation, the mounting national debt, rising taxes, falling market, scarce housing, cancer, epidemics, farm blights. It has a kind of 'threat value.' It is read so that the reader may be informed and prepared. When a reader selects delayed reward news, he jerks himself into the world of surrounding reality to which he can adapt himself only by hard work. When he selects news of the other kind, he retreats usually from the world of threatening reality toward the dream world.

Unstable Boundaries

"For any individual, of course, the boundaries of these two classes are not stable. For example, a sociologist may read news of crime as a social problem, rather than for its immediate reward. A coach may read a sports story for its threat value: he may have to play that team next week. A politician may read an account of his latest successful rally, not for its delayed reward, but very much as his wife reads an account of a party. In any given story of corruption or disaster, a thoughtful reader receives not only the immediate reward of vicarious experience, but also the delayed reward of information and preparedness. Therefore, while the division of categories holds in general, the predispositions of the individual may transfer any story from one kind of reading to another, or divide the experience between the two kinds of reward.

"But what is going on psychologically beneath these two kinds of choice of news?

"A kind of choice which we have called immediate reward is simple associational learning, or problem solving. A stimulus is present; a response is made; the response is rewarded. When the stimulus is again presented, there is a tendency to make the same response. If it is again rewarded, the tendency to make that same response is progressively reinforced. If it is not rewarded, the tendency is progressively extinguished. The stimulus in this case, of course, is the news item. The response is the decision to read or listen to the item. The reward may be either a reduction of tension or discomfort (e.g., curiosity, worry) or an increase in satisfaction (e.g., from a vicarious enjoyment of the achievements of the winning team).

"But what is the process which leads a reader or listener to select a news item even though he knows it may not reduce tension, but actually **increase** tension; not relieve discomfort but actually **increase** discomfort; not bring satisfaction, but actually bring dissatisfaction and worry? We have already suggested that these two kinds of reading are related to what Freud called the two principles of mental functioning, the Pleasure Principle and the Reality Principle. That is, the immediate reward choice is learned through trial and error because it succeeds in reducing drives and tensions. The delayed reward choice, on the other hand, is made not because it is pleasant, but because it is realistic. It is not pleasant to be afraid or to anticipate danger; but it is necessary, if one is to avert harm and avoid danger.

Two Aspects of Learning

"O. H. Mowrer, in his reinterpretation of conditioning and problem solving, has advanced a concept of learning which is extremely suggestive to any student of the process of communication. He points out that there are really two aspects of learning, related respectively to the two nervous systems. The central nervous system is the one chiefly through which we affect society; the autonomic nervous system is the one chiefly through which society affects us. The central system is the one through which habits—that is, learned responses of the skeletal musculature—are formed. The autonomous system is the one through which attitudes or emotions—that is, learned responses of glands, smooth muscle, and vasomotor tissue—are formed. Habits, of course, come into being to reduce drives and solve problems. Attitudes and emotions, on the other hand, are themselves drives or problems, and call forth skeletal reactions on the basis of which the central nervous system may go into action and develop habits.

"Therefore, responses to the two kinds of news corresponds to what Sherington calls **anticipatory** and **consummatory** responses. One is made as the consummation of a drive and with the expectation of immediate reward. The other is made to set up a drive, and in expectation of danger or delayed reward. One reduces a drive and is therefore pleasant; the other sets up a drive and may be painful. The two responses are not always clearly differentiated. For example, the dramatic quality in a foreign news story may give an immediate reward, while the content arouses only fear or anticipation of danger. But learning may take place through either method. Gordon Allport gives an example of learning through the anticipatory response: 'Suppose I mispronounce a word in a public speech . . . and suffer mounting shame and discomfort. Tension has been **created**, not reduced; dissatisfaction and not satisfaction has resulted; but in this sequence of events I shall surely learn.'

Child's Reading Habits

"When a child starts to read a newspaper he usually begins with the comics and the pictures. He proceeds to the sports news, the human interest stories, and sensational stories of crime and disaster, all before he makes much use of public affairs news. It is interesting to conjecture how a child begins to read public affairs news. Perhaps he has an experience in which he is able to make not-too-long-delayed use of something he has read in the paper. Perhaps it helps him answer a question at school, or to take his raincoat and avoid a soaking, or to avoid a street which is closed for repairs—in other words, to avoid trouble by being informed. He looks at the paper with respect. If reading the particular item was of benefit to him, would it not be well for him to read other items also? As his understanding broadens, he perceives more of the causative and repetitive relation of events in society. And thus he substitutes other stimuli for the stimulus which has had a proved reward, and as his horizon broadens comes to see more and more reason for reading news of public affairs.

"Thus the time when he comes to read public affairs news is an important point in his socialization. Most of the news in the immediate reward group is important to him individually because of the individual satisfaction and drive-reduction it accomplishes. But the news in the delayed group is important to him because it arouses the tensions and anticipation that are necessary for survival and development, that help him to be more effective, better prepared, **socially**. . . .

Proximity And People

"If we accept tentatively the theory that there are two general classes of news, two patterns of reading, and two aspects of the learning process involved, then another variable becomes important. Within each kind of news, what determines the likelihood that a given item will be selected? What determines the attractiveness of a given item to the reader?

"Leaving out chance, conflicting mental sets, and the qualities of presentation which call attention to one item over others or make one item easier to read than others, we can hypothesize that a person chooses the items which he thinks are likely to give him the greatest reward. The exact yardstick by which he measures this predictive value is an individual matter based on experience and personality structure, and powerfully influenced by the momentary situation. But in general there seems to be greater expectation of reward when there appears to be greater possibility of the reader identifying himself with the news.

"This may be what the textbooks mean by proximity as a news value, but is not to be interpreted as mere physical proximity. For example: a fight in an American city may be physically nearer than a battle in the South Pacific, but if a mother has a son in the battle then how much more easily can she identify herself with the distant battle than with the nearer fight. On the other hand, the American scrap is likely to seem closer to the average reader than a Dutch coup in Indonesia, although one may ultimately have large repercussions for the colonial system and for international trade, whereas the other will doubtless pass out of the realm of important affairs as soon as the participants sober up. Similarly, it is a greater reward to identify oneself with the local team which is winning a championship than with a faraway team that is equally good. One of the startling accomplishments of mass communications has been to bring far corners and faraway people almost next door, so that it becomes relatively easy for a reader to identify himself with the personal affairs of movie stars in Hollywood, and for thousands of sports fans who have never been in South Bend to feel like alumni of Notre Dame. It is also easier to identify oneself with an event which is vividly described and which has a minimum of indirection. But I think it is safe to say that the individual world of the reader will for the most part determine the ease with which he can identify himself with the given item, and this in turn will powerfully affect the probability of the item being read."

[Journalism Quarterly, 26:259-69 (1949).]

Letters to the Editor

"The National Study of Newspaper Reading," sponsored in 1961 by the Newsprint Information Committee, found that 7.9% of the adults in the sample had at some time written a letter to the editor, and that 1.3% had written such a letter "in the past three months."

Newspaper Readership by Influential Persons

Postcard questionnaires were sent from New York to 641 persons in positions of influence in 67 counties in Kentucky and 10 counties in Indiana in January, 1965.

The counties were those in which the Louisville Courier-Journal (morning) reached 10% or more of the households on weekdays. The newspaper was not identified as originator of the questionnaires.

About two-thirds of the addressees responded as to whether they read the newspaper "usually," "sometimes" or "not at all." "Usually" was defined as two or more times a week for the daily and two or more times a month for the Sunday issue.

The weekday results were as follows:

	Usually	Sometimes	Not at All
Mayors	98%	2%	0%
County judges	98	2	0
County attorneys	96	0	4
Circuit judges	88	8	4
College heads	96	4	0
Bank presidents	89	4	7
Newspaper eds./publs.	83	10	7
County prosecutors	81	9	9
Total	91%	5%	4%

Sunday readership differed only slightly from daily.

Credibility of the Newspaper: An Experiment

Many persons believe a scandal when it is reported in a newspaper. But few believe it when it is in a scandal magazine.

To what extent do readers believe scandal when it is reported in a newspaper? Kelly, in 1957, did an experiment in which the benchmark was a scandal magazine.

An analysis of the March, 1957 issue of Confidential magazine showed that 40.7% of the editorial content represented "values" directly related to sex and an additional 43.7% represented "values" touching on or leading up to the topic of sex.

This issue contained an article by a woman author which was highly ambiguous. It was entitled, "I own 25% of ——————." (The actual name of the famous baseball player is not used in this summary).

The article was written in a style characteristic of scandal magazines. With the touch of a clever copyreader, the article conceivably could appear in a few newspapers. It insinuated immoral post-marriage activities on the part of a well-known baseball player, but remained relatively free of any libelous statements. That is, it didn't come right out and state that the baseball player had not been true to his wife.

The experiment used 80 Stanford University freshmen male students as subjects, one-half of whom lived in one dormitory and the other half in another dormitory. The interviewing was done on two consecutive days so that the second group was not aware that the first group had been interviewed.

One group was asked to read a mimeographed copy of the article which indicated it had appeared in a recent issue of the Los Angeles Times. The second group read the article in Confidential magazine.

The key question was "Do you think—————has or has not been true to his wife?" The subjects were handed a slip on which they could check one of the following responses: "Has been true," "probably has been true," "probably has not been true" and "has been true."

The hypothesis was that more people will believe an article of this kind in a newspaper than in Confidential.

Other questions tested the subjects as to whether or not they were cynically oriented or "dirty-minded," but so few qualified in these categories that the suspected factors did not operate in the experiment.

The results were as follows:

	"Newspaper" Readers	**Confidential Readers**
Belief in source:		
Has not been true	6	1
Probably has not been true	17	5
Subtotal	(23)	(6)

(continued on next page)

	"Newspaper" Readers	Confidential Readers
Disbelief in source:		
Probably has been true	15	30
Has been true	2	4
Subtotal	(17)	(34)
TOTAL	40	40

(Differences are statistically significant)

The data in the table may mean that, when a scandal is reported in a newspaper, many persons believe it because of the high credibility of the source.

The two groups were also asked, "Have you ever read something like this in a newspaper before?" Of those who were told the article appeared in a newspaper, 85% answered No; of those who had read the article in Confidential, 75% answered No.

For previous summaries of research relating to source credibility, see "News Research for Better Newspapers," (1966), pp 95 and 128.

(J. M. Kelly, The Credibility of Confidential Magazine and the Newspaper Compared. Master's thesis, Stanford University, 1957)

"TV Tab's" Main Use is as a Directory

In the spring of 1965—six months after its introduction in the Sunday issue—the popularity of its "TV Tab" was measured by the Rochester (N.Y.) Democrat and Chronicle. A 21.3% return was received from postal cards distributed by carriers.

One finding was that readers use it mainly as a directory. Readers were asked which were their favorite "features" in the "TV Tab." The weighted responses (with first choice votes in parentheses) were as follows:

Day-by-Day Listings	1801	(167)
Movie Guide	1604	(129)
Sports Calendar	1009	(68)
TV Mailbag	988	(61)
Children's Programs	432	(16)
TV Starscramble	423	(21)
Others	224	(11)

The second and third features are extensions of the listings.

The percentage of readers who looked through "TV Tab" "from first to back" on Sunday was 71.7; the percentage who keep it for reference throughout the week was 78.

Eighty-one per cent said they found "TV Tab" "useful" and 76.3% said it fills their need for a program guide.

How Much Do Readers Know? (III)
Medicine and Science

Knowledge of science is a direct function of exposure to science information in the mass media. However, the differences among people with varying degrees of formal education are great. This is exhibited in two national studies.

In 1947, Benson and Benson tested a national sample by asking several questions about medical science. The results:

	Grade School	High School	College
Do you happen to know whether tuberculosis is carried by a germ?			
Yes (correct)	60%	63%	87%
No	14	13	6
Don't know	26	24	7
Have you heard of these diseases (multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, cerebral palsy)			
Heard of any	61%	91%	98%
Heard of none	39	9	2
Do you think a person can be born with tuberculosis?			
Yes	62%	51%	36%
No (correct)	24	34	51
Don't know	14	15	13
Do you think cancer is curable?			
Yes (correct)	23%	37%	43%
No	29	17	15
Don't know	18	15	6
Qualified	30	31	36

("Correct" in the foregoing tables means "most correct response".)

At various times, the American Institute of Public Opinion has tested the public's knowledge in certain areas of non-medical science. Such information has been available in the mass media. But great differences in knowledge were found among people with varying amounts of formal education:

	Grade School	High School	College
(1945)			
Could correctly identify Einstein	29%	63%	91%
Could not	71	37	9
(1954)			
What is meant by the fall-out of an H-bomb?			
Correct	8%	16%	36%
Incorrect	7	11	13
Don't know	85	73	51

	Grade School	High School	College
(1956) Do you know of any uses of atomic energy except for war purposes?			
Medicine, medical research	6%	16%	37%
Other use	19	36	45
Don't know	75	48	18

How Much Do Readers Know? (IV)
Satellites

University of Michigan Survey Research Center did two national studies for the National Association of Science Writers—the first six months before the launching of Sputnik I (Oct. 4, 1957), and the second six months after the launching.

Prior to the first survey, a considerable amount of information about satellites had been generated by the International Geophysical Year.

One question asked was, "Have you heard anything about launching a space satellite, sometimes called a man-made moon?"

Table 1 shows the answers to the question:

TABLE 1

	Before	After
Heard of satellites	46%	91%
Heard nothing	54	8
Not ascertained	—	1
	100%	100%

Respondents who had heard of the satellites were asked in both surveys: "From what you have heard, what is the purpose of launching these satellites?"

Some respondents were specific as to the purpose (e.g., "finding out about weather and atmospheric conditions"). Some stated only a general purpose (e.g., "to collect scientific data"). Some mentioned future possibilities (e.g., "We're working toward a manned space station"). Some gave misinformation (e.g., "to find another planet for people to live on"). Others gave such responses as "to beat the Russians". These responses are shown in Table 2, and are analyzed in Table 3 by sex. The greater gains in knowledge were by women, although the difference between the sexes is small.

TABLE 2

Satellite purpose	Before	After
Scientific, detailed information	12%	11%
Scientific, general information	8	16
Competition with Russians	1	20
Future possibilities	—	17
Subtotal	(21)	(64)
Heard something; don't know purpose	14	23
Misinformation	11	4
Heard nothing	54	8
Not ascertained	—	1
	100%	100%

TABLE 3

	Male		Female	
Satellite purpose	Before	After	Before	After
Scientific, detailed information	19%	15%	6%	8%
Scientific, general information	11	18	6	14
Competition with Russians	1	22	1	19
Future possibilities	—	17	17	17
Heard something; don't know purpose	13	16	15	27
Misinformation	13	6	10	4
Heard nothing	43	6	10	10
Not ascertained	—	—	—	1
	100%	100%	100%	100%

(Satellites, Science, and the Public. Copyrighted by the National Association of Science Writers, Inc., 1959.)

How Much Do Readers Know? (V)
The Atom Bomb

Many of the tests of knowledge made by the American Institute of Public Opinion (Gallup) are topical. That is, they relate to some aspect of a recently reported event.

In 1952, AIPO asked, "What mineral, or metal, is important in the making of the atom bomb?" The results, by education, were as follows:

	Grade School	High School	College	Total
Correct	37%	63%	84%	59%
Incorrect	10	9	5	9
Don't know	53	28	11	32
	100	100	100	100

In 1954, AIPO asked: "Do you happen to know how far away from the Red China mainland the islands of Quemoy and Matsu are?" The results, by education, were as follows:

	Grade School	High School	College	Total
Correct	8%	14%	30%	14%
Incorrect	14	14	28	16
Don't know	78	72	42	70
	100	100	100	100

High school graduates accounted for approximately one-half of the samples. Their responses are about the same as for the population as a whole.

The percentages are not only measures of readers' knowledge, but of their exposure to certain newspaper content. Some of the exposure or lack of exposure is selective on the part of the reader, but the lack of exposure, in some instances, could be due to the absence of such facts in a particular newspaper.

How Much Do Readers Know? (VI) The Vietcong

On March 15, some social scientists at Stanford University and the University of Chicago published the results of a national poll on attitudes toward the war in Vietnam. The study was made in cooperation with the National Opinion Research Center of Chicago.

One of the questions was "As you understand it, who are the Vietcong—the government we are supporting in Vietnam, the South Vietnamese communists, North Vietnamese, or who?"

Government we are supporting	3.9%
South Vietnamese communists	29.0
North Vietnamese	40.5
Others	10.2
Don't know	16.5

As the table shows, 71% of the national sample of 1474 adults could not identify the Vietcong accurately.

How Much Do Readers Know? (VII) Financial Terms

Public Opinion Research Corporation of Princeton, N.J., for many years has reported opinion for its corporation clients. In August, 1961 they conducted personal interviews with 240 stockholders in one or more American companies, the stockholders being selected by probability.

This was not a sample of the adult population, but of stockholders; one-sixth of adults are stockholders.

A stockholder was handed a card containing thirty-five financial terms and asked to sort them according to whether he knew the term "very well," "fairly well," or if the term was new to him. Next, the stockholder was asked to define the words he said he knew.

The answers were coded as "correct or partially correct," "incorrect or not sure" and "unfamiliar."

Table 1 reports the percentage of "correct and partially correct" answers for nineteen of the terms.

Men, it will be noted, scored only about 23% higher than women overall.

Since all of these are accounting terms, a stockholder must understand the concept in order to define the term. This is apparent when one notes the low scores on "bonds," "funded debt," "debt capital" and "equity capital."

Possibly, the findings explain why some people seek the advice of newspaper financial columnists about their investment decisions.

It might be an interesting experiment for an editor to test editorial employees on the meaning of the simplest of the terms listed in Table 1. Here are two examples of misuse found recently in a newspaper and Time magazine:

> . . . Mr. Blough had a rough time at the annual stockholders' meeting. After nearly four hours of often acrimonious exchange with 1300 *coupon clippers* . . .
>
> . . . Samuel I. Newhouse, head of a newspaper empire, made the bid Tuesday. He offered $150 a share for shares whose highest *yield* has never been more than $135.

The New York Stock Exchange, 11 Wall Street, New York, 5, N.Y., publishes a booklet for free distribution which defines most financial terms.

TABLE 1

	Men	Women	All Stockholders
Profits	80%	75%	78%
Net profits	73	65	70
[illegible]	72	61	67
Dividends	62	54	59
Assets	53	45	50
Depreciation	53	44	49
Working capital	47	37	43
Earnings	35	24	30
Market price	34	23	29
Bonds	32	18	26
Depletion allowances	18	8	14

(continued on next page)

	Men	Women	All Stockholders
Par value	20%	5%	13%
Stock option	17	7	12
Price-earnings ratio	10	0	6
Cash flow	5	4	5
Debentures	9	1	5
Funded debt	8	0	5
Debt capital	7	1	4
Equity capital	5	0	3

(Opinion Research Corporation, The Public Opinion Index for Industry, October, 1961)

How Much Do Readers Know? (VIII)
Communist China

The appendix to "The American People and China" by A. T. Steele, published this year, reports the findings of a national opinion survey conducted in May and June, 1964 by the University of Michigan Survey Research Center. The study was sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations.

One of the questions was, "Do you happen to know what kind of government most of China has right now—whether it's democratic, or Communist, or what?" The answers were as follows:

	Know Communist Government Controls Most of China	Do Not Know
Total sample	72%	28%
Men	81	19
Women	66	34
By education:		
Grade school	46	54
Some high school	61	39
Completed high school	83	17
Some college	94	6
College degree	97	3

Adults with a grade school education or less were 26.4% of the national sample of 1501. College degree holders were 11.1%.

The following question was asked **only of those who knew that mainland China is ruled by a Communist government**: "Have you heard anything about another Chinese government besides the Communist one?" The answers were as follows:

	Know About Nationalist Government	Do Not Know	Not Answered
Total sample of 1088	60%	39%	1%
Men	71	29	0
Women	50	49	1

Respondents were also asked whether "the United States has been treating Russia and China the same up to now or has been treating them differently."

Only 60% gave the correct answer, viz., that the United States was closer or more friendly to Russia.

The following question was also asked of the whole sample: "Have you happened to hear anything about the fighting in Vietnam?"

Seventy-four per cent answered "Yes" and 25% answered "No." One per cent did not answer.

Of those who knew there was fighting in Vietnam (1127 adults), this question was asked: "How about the United States getting out of Vietnam completely?" Fifty-three per cent opposed getting out—37% "definitely" and 16% "probably." Only 18% "definitely" favored getting out.

Seventy-five per cent thought the United States should continue to supply arms and training to the South Vietnamese. Forty-one per cent favored using American forces "if the Communist rebels were winning."

(A. T. Steele, The American People and China, 1966)

How Much Do Readers Know? (IX)
Percentage with Adult Experience of Certain Events

The percentage of the population, as of April, 1966, who did not have adult experience with the following events or situations was as follows (By "adult experience" is meant the stated percentage of the population which was born or was 21 years of age at the time mentioned):

World War I	93.0%
1929 Stock market crash	[illegible]
Prohibition	80.4
Pre-Social Security	76.6
Mass unemployment (mid-1941)	70.9
World War II	66.0
Korean War	56.6
Pre-space age (Sputnik I was Oct. 4, 1957)	52.1
A Republican president	48.0

(National Industrial Conference Board)

How Much Do Readers Know? (X) Name of Their Congressman

In August 1965, the Gallup Poll asked "Do you happen to know the name of the present Representative in Congress from your district?"

The responses were: Yes, 46%; No, 54%. Exactly the same responses were reported when Gallup asked the question in 1942.

The Yes responses by age groups were: 21-29 years, 37%; 30-49 years, 47%; 50 years and older, 50%.

Chapter 3

READERSHIP

For summaries of previous research about the subject matter of this chapter, see "News Research For Better Newspapers," (1966), pages 36-45.

Readership by Listeners and Viewers

> **Exposure to the report of an event via the broadcast media tends to increase the audience for a newspaper story about that event.**
>
> **Few newspaper subscribers who have learned about an event from the broadcast media fail to read about it in their newspaper.**

Dr. Galen Rarick, of the University of Oregon School of Journalism, conducted a recognition-type readership study of the July 22 issue of the Salem (Ore.) Capital Journal (eve.) The study was sponsored jointly by ANPA and the Capital Journal.

At the conclusion of the interview, the interviewer again showed the respondent the front page and asked: "Which of these items, if any, had you seen on television or heard on radio **before** you read the paper?"

Salem has four radio stations, and signals are received from stations in other cities. Although Salem has no tv station, good signals are received from five stations in Portland, 40 miles distant. In Marion county, 92.3% of the homes have TV sets in working order.

Only four of the front page stories could have been learned about from radio or tv.

One story had this banner headline:

Two Die in New York, Cleveland Riots

Media exposure was as follows:

	Men	**Women**
Read it in Capital Journal	[illegible]	[illegible]
Had heard it on radio	8	9
Had seen it on tv	13	21
Radio and/or tv*	18	25

*A few respondents had both heard and seen the story.

Another story had a 3-column headline:

Astronauts Back
At Launch Site

Media exposure was as follows:

	Men	Women
Read it in Capital Journal	50%	42%
Had heard it on radio	7	6
Had seen it on tv	13	20
Radio and/or tv	18	23

A third story had a 5-column headline:

Marine Battalion Freed
Of North Viet Division

Media exposure was as follows:

	Men	Women
Read it in Capital Journal	46%	37%
Had heard it on radio	3	2
Had seen it on tv	4	6
Radio and/or tv	6	8

A fourth story reported that city officials have asked county officials not to sell certain sewer bonds. The two column headline was as follows:

City: Don't
Sell Bonds

Media exposure is discussed below.

Did readership of these stories differ among those who were exposed to them via broadcast media and those who were not exposed? The answers for the first three stories are in Table 1.

TABLE 1

	Readership of stories by:			
	Those Exposed to Broadcast		Those Not Exposed to Broadcast	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Two Die in New York, Cleveland Riots	74%	72%	58%	46%
Astronauts Back at Launch Site	77	69	42	34
Marine Battalion Freed *Of North Viet Division*	73	83	42	32

In the instance of the local story about sewer bonds, no inference can be made. Apparently, this story was not broadcast by any Portland television station. Only one person in the sample who had read the story reported having heard it on the radio. (Readership in the Capital Journal was men 51% and women 42%.)

In evaluating this data one should keep in mind that the sample was limited to adults in households which subscribed to the Capital Journal. Not included were respondents who subscribed to another newspaper or to no newspaper at all. Also, the question referred to listening and viewing before the stories had been read. It is possible that some persons were exposed to a broadcast after they had read the stories.

Dr. Rarick cautions against making an inference that learning about these events "caused" these people to read the newspaper stories. There is at least some evidence that a high interest in current events causes one to expose himself to news in two or more media.

Even so, he says, "the data are consistent with the hypothesis that exposure to an event via one medium tends to stimulate exposure via another medium.

"And it is quite clear that exposure via radio or television does not result in any serious loss of audience for the newspaper.

"The percentage of the sample who reported hearing about an event via the broadcast media but who did not read the Capital Journal story of that event ranged from a high of only 6.9 for women for both the 'Astronauts Back' and the 'Two Die' stories to a low of zero for women for the 'City: Don't Sell' story," Dr. Rarick said.

"On the other hand, the percentage of the respondents who were exposed to an event through **only** the newspaper ranged from a low of 26 for women on the 'Astronauts Back' story to a high of 51 for men on the 'City: Don't Sell' story.

"In all," he continued, "the evidence does suggest that exposure to an event via the broadcast media tends to increase the audience for a newspaper story about the event."

Readership of Stock Tables

In a personal interview readership study of the July 22 issue of the Salem (Ore.) Capital Journal—sponsored jointly by ANPA and the newspaper—, Dr. Galen Rarick, of the University of Oregon School of Journalism, obtained the following percentages for "yesterday's" readership of stock quotations.

	Men	Women
N.Y. Stock Exchange (267 stocks)	17%	8%
Over the Counter (28 stocks)	5	2
Mutual Funds (50)	9	4

The following question was asked of those who had read (i.e., had referred to) any of the quotations: "How many stock market quotations did you read in the paper?" The results were:

	Men	Women
1	17.4%	21.4%
2 or 3	28.3	25.0
4 or 5	6.5	7.1
6 or more	47.8	46.4

Inspection of the table shows that almost one-half of the readers had looked at 6 or more stocks.

Then this question was asked of those who had read one or more quotations: "Why did you read them?" The results were:

	Men	Women
Own one or more stocks	76%	88%
Am considering buying	24	8
Other reasons	18	12

(The columns total more than 100% because some respondents gave more than one reason)

Some of the "other" reasons were: "To see how my brother is doing," "to keep track of the economy," "interested in the progress of the company I work for," "I used to own stocks," and "my relatives own stocks."

An interesting finding is that a good many persons refer to the tables although, at the time, they do not own any stocks.

Considering the reasons given and the fact that the Capital Journal published only 267 Big Board quotations (1,400 or more stocks are traded on an average day), it is possible that the reader of a newspaper which published all of the quotations would refer to a few more quotations than were reported for this newspaper, and that the readership of the table would be somewhat higher.

Readership of a Saturday Paper

A readership study of the Minneapolis (Minn.) Star (evening) was conducted on Monday, Oct. 3 and Tuesday, Oct. 4, 1955 of the issue of Saturday, Oct. 1.

The study was done by the School of Journalism of the University of Minnesota by the conventional method, but only selected pages were measured. The sample was 115 males and 128 females who were 18 years old or older.

Exactly 81% of the sample had read the issue. Those who had not read it gave these main reasons: competing social and sports events; working; away from home; and illness.

The paper was read at these times:

3 to 6 p.m.	37%
6 to 9 p.m.	55
9 p.m. to midnight	12
After midnight	3
	*107

(*Eleven per cent read the Star in two or more of these periods on Saturday.)

Eleven per cent had read the Saturday issue on Sunday, of whom 6% read it on both Saturday and Sunday and 5% on Sunday only.

The estimated reading time compares with the time spent on a previous weekday issue as follows:

Wednesday, October, 1954	41.0 minutes
Saturday, October, 1955	36.8 minutes

The Saturday issue was one-third to one-half the size of weekday issues. This could account for the lesser amount of time spent on the Saturday issue.

Reading of comics was just as high in the Saturday issue as in the weekday issues. The same was true for want ads. Reading of the first sports page on Saturday was just as high for men but lower for women. The editorial page, on the whole, had lower readership scores on Saturday. Readership of tv logs and radio logs was higher for the Saturday issue.

Readership of Sports News

The Omaha World-Herald, last June, surveyed a sample of readers of the "Sunrise" edition who lived in the City Zone, which also includes Council Bluffs, Iowa. A self-administered questionnaire was used.

Some of the questions related to different kinds of sports news. The results are presented in the following table:

	Regularly	Occasionally	Never	Not Answered
	Men			
Sports pages	62%	20.9%	4.7%	12.4%
Professional sports	66.3	18.2	7.0	8.5
College sports	55.0	27.9	7.4	9.7
H.S. sports	43.4	34.5	11.2	10.9
Professional football	62.4	19.4	9.3	8.9
Horse racing	61.2	21.7	10.5	6.6
Professional basketball	50.0	25.2	14.3	10.5
Hunting	43.8	24.4	19.4	12.4
Fishing	43.4	25.6	19.4	11.6

(continued on next page)

	Regularly	Occasionally	Never	Not Answered
	Men			
Professional golf	43.4%	28.3%	17.0%	11.3 %
Boxing	41.9	34.1	14.3	9.7
Bowling	36.8	27.9	26.4	8.9
Bowling scores in fine print	27.1	23.3	38.0	11.6
Auto racing	36.8	32.6	18.6	12.0
Track	31.8	34.1	22.1	12.0
Softball	31.8	31.0	25.2	12.0
Swimming	30.2	30.6	26.8	12.4
Tennis	24.0	27.5	36.1	12.4
	Women			
Sports pages	31.5	45.7	15.9	6.9
Professional sports	29.7	38.4	25.0	6.9
High school sports	19.6	48.2	22.4	9.8
College sports	17.7	44.6	27.9	9.8
Horse racing	36.2	32.3	26.1	5.4
Professional football	22.8	28.6	39.5	9.1
Professional golf	16.7	28.6	45.3	9.4
Bowling	16.7	35.5	39.1	8.7
Bowling scores in fine print	13.0	23.9	50.4	12.7
Professional basketball	16.3	29.0	43.5	11.2
Swimming	12.3	29.0	45.7	13.0
Fishing	10.9	22.5	54.3	12.3
Softball	10.5	25.0	52.9	11.6
Auto racing	9.8	30.8	48.2	11.2
Tennis	8.3	22.1	56.9	12.7
Hunting	8.0	25.0	53.2	13.8
Track	7.6	[illegible]	53.2	12.0
Boxing	6.5	[illegible]	54.4	12.7

It will be noted that the largest sex differences as to rank order are for hunting and boxing.

When a self-administered questionnaire is used, some portion of the "not answered" responses are actually "never" responses. This is because some people—mainly older people—do not check the items which they never read.

Readership of the Church Page

Dr. Galen Rarick, of the University of Oregon School of Journalism, last July measured the readership of certain pages of the Salem (Ore.) Capital Journal. The study was sponsored jointly by ANPA and the newspaper.

Dr. Rarick found that 30% of the men and 47% of the women "usually" read the church page, published Saturday.

He related these scores to the frequency of church attendance, as shown in the table below:

Frequency of Church Attendance

	Almost Never	1 to 3 Times a Month	Every Week	
Men				
Usually read	18%	34%	48%	100%
Usually do not read..	60	23	17	100
Women				
Usually read	19	34	47	100
Usually do not read..	58	20	22	100

Minneapolis Star Survey

The Minneapolis Star measured the readership of the first of three church pages in the issue of Saturday, October 1, 1955. The personal interview survey found that only 28% of all adult readers, interviewed on Monday and Tuesday, had read anything on that page.

The highest read item, "The Week in Religion" column, was read by 20% of the men and 15% of the women. No other single item on the page—news or ad—was "seen" by more than 8% of the sample.

(Ed. Note: For a previous report of readership of the church page, see the summary of the research by Robert Root and Harold D. Holder at page 42 of "News Research for Better Newspapers," published in April 1966 by the ANPA Foundation.)

Readership of the Youth Section

Some adults read the youth section. Dr. Galen Rarick, of the University of Oregon School of Journalism, last July asked a sample of 673 adult readers of the Salem (Ore.) Capital Journal about their readership and found that 36% of the men and 26% of the women "usually" read the section. The study was sponsored jointly by ANPA and the Capital Journal.

The Omaha World-Herald last June also asked adult subscribers to the Sunday edition in the City Zone, to the "Sunrise" daily edition in the City Zone and to outstate daily subscribers: "Do you have teen-agers in your family?"

The surveys indicated that 41% to 42% of all three types of subscribers (1,698 adults) have teen-agers in their family, although the range was from 33% in one survey to 48.5% in another.

The World-Herald asked teenagers in the homes of Sunday subscribers: "How often do you read the peach colored teen section, 'Herald Teen'?" The results were:

Regularly	53.1%	Never	4.7%
Occasionally	25.6%	Not answered	16.5%

Teenagers in two types of households were also asked, "Did you read the peach colored teen section, 'Herald Teen' last Friday?" The results were:

	Yes	No	Not Answered	
Outstate daily . . .	58%	24%	18%	100%
"Sunrise" ed. (CZ)	54	17	30	101

When teenagers in the same households were asked, "Did you read the daily World-Herald yesterday?" the answers were as follows:

	Yes	No	Not Answered	
Outstate daily . . .	72%	10%	18%	100%
"Sunrise" ed. (CZ)	61	15	24	100

When teenagers in all three types of households were asked, "If you had your way, what changes or improvements would you make with the peach colored youth section, 'Herald Teen'?" only one-fifth to one-fourth answered the question. Most of the answers were conventionalities and irrelevant suggestions.

Readership of the Real Estate Section

In a study of the Salem (Ore.) Capital Journal last July, Dr. Galen Rarick, of the University of Oregon School of Journalism, found that 36% of the men and 26% of the women in the sample "usually" read the real estate section.

The study was sponsored jointly by ANPA and the Capital Journal.

In an article in the Summer, 1966 issue of the Columbia Journalism Review, Ferdinand Kuhn was highly critical of the editorial content of the real estate section in many newspapers. He also had praise for five newspapers which assigned reporters to write about the urban and suburban environment, "which includes the planning of buildings, parklands, transportation and housing."

Readership of Medical and Nonmedical Science News

Women are much heavier readers of medical news than are men, although more men than women read nonmedical science news.

When the Michigan Survey Research Center, in 1957, asked a national sample, with respect to medical news, whether they glanced at it, skipped it, read some of it or read all of it, the responses for "read all" was: Men 26%, women 47%.

In national studies by the same agency in 1957 and 1958 of reading of medical and nonmedical science news the responses were analyzed by education, as follows:

	8th Grade	Some H.S.	Finished H.S.	Any College
Medical news				
Pct. who "read all":				
1957	25	42	49	44
1958	30	39	43	45
Nonmedical science news				
Pct. who "read all" or "some":				
1957	39	59	69	80
1958	49	61	70	85

The first table shows that, after the eighth grade, reading of medical news is not highly related to education. The second table, however, shows that amount of education is a predictor of reading nonmedical science news. In the future newspaper audience, there will be a larger proportion of readers in the upper education categories.

Many Readers Want More Medical News

The University of Michigan Survey Research Center conducted a national study for the National Association of Science Writers and New York University in 1958.

Among other things, readers were asked about the amount of reading they did of several kinds of news (whether they read some of it, read all, read none, etc.). They were also asked whether they wanted more or less of each kind of news.

The table on page 38 reports the percentage of those who said they read all of each kind of news and comics and the percentage who said they wanted more of such content.

	Reads All	Wants More
Local News	48%	35%
"People in the News"	40	27
Medical News	37	42
Comics	30	8
Nonmedical science news	28	28
Crime	27	5
National politics	23	14
Foreign events	21	14
Sports	15	9
Society	11	4

One inference is that three out of eight readers read all of the medical news they are exposed to and an even larger number want more medical news.

A second inference is that a good many people are avid readers of news about nonmedical science—about the same number as read all of the comics—and want more of it.
(Science, the News and the Public. Copyright 1958 by National Association of Science Writers, Inc. Used by permission.)

The Effect of Sputnik I on Reading of Science News

The launching of Sputnik I on Oct. 4, 1957 caused only a moderate increase of interest in science news, six months later.

But it increased greatly the interest in science news of all women and of lesser educated men.

These facts were found by the University of Michigan Survey Research Center in nationwide studies done for the National Association of Science Writers. The "before" study was done six months prior to the launching and the "after" study six months after the launching.

There was a great volume of science news in this interval, and some of it had the element of suspense, as when hourly bulletins were issued on the progress of the United States launchings.

During this period, three out of four managing editors replied in a questionnaire that they had increased the amount of space given to science in their papers by 50 per cent.

The accompanying table shows, by sex and education, the amount of reading of science news in newspapers before and after Sputnik I launching.

In no group did more than one reader in four skip over science news after the launching. In all groups after the launching a majority read at least some science news.

MEN

	Grade School		Completed H.S.		College	
Science Reading	**Before**	**After**	**Before**	**After**	**Before**	**After**
Reads all	26%	26%	46%	42%	53%	47%
Reads some	28	39	32	32	35	41
Glances at	19	17	17	18	9	8
Skips over	22	16	5	6	2	4
Not ascertained	5	2	—	2	1	—
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

WOMEN

Reads all	16%	21%	26%	29%	29%	43%
Reads some	24	33	40	41	43	38
Glances at	23	20	17	18	21	15
Skips over	35	23	16	10	7	3
Not ascertained	2	3	1	2	—	1
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

(Satellites, Science, and the Public. Copyrighted by the National Association of Science Writers, Inc., 1959.)

Culture and Other Special Interests

The Omaha (Neb.) World-Herald last June asked a sample of City Zone readers of the "Sunrise" edition how often they read news and feature stories about certain subjects of special interest.

The results are in the table page 40. Readership of the sports and women's pages are included as one kind of benchmark.

	Regularly	Occasionally	Never	Not Answered
		Men		
Music	12%	35%	41%	13%
Drama	11	35	41	14
Art	11	31	44	14
Science	27	47	14	13
Medicine	33	43	12	11
Religion	22	47	19	12
Education	30	46	12	12
Business	31	45	12	12
Sports pages	62	21	5	12
Women's pages	13	34	36	17
		Women		
Music	19	43	29	10
Drama	21	42	28	10
Art	18	37	34	12
Science	16	54	17	13
Medicine	46	38	10	6
Religion	31	48	12	9
Education	40	38	12	10
Business	22	48	19	11
Sports pages	32	46	16	7
Women's pages	76	16	3	5

An interesting finding is that women's interest in business is higher than their interest in some other fields of special interest.

Readership of Pages in Omaha World-Herald

In June, 1965 the Omaha World-Herald conducted a self-administered questionnaire survey of a sample of readers about readership of features and certain pages. The results for readership of the pages by readers in the City Zone are presented below. The teenagers' percentages were not broken down by sex.

Page	Regularly	Occasionally	Never and Not answered
Amusement			
Men	43.4%	43.2%	13.4%
Women	43.4	47.0	9.6
Teenagers	46.8	32.3	20.9
Picture			
Men	77.9	14.3	7.8
Women	81.5	13.8	4.7
Teenagers	54.4	28.9	16.7
Editorial			
Men	53.6	34.0	12.4
Women	55.5	33.0	11.5
Teenagers	23.0	34.3	42.7
Women's			
Men	11.2	35.2	53.6
Women	67.9	23.4	8.7
Teenagers	13.9	21.2	64.9
Sports			
Men	68.0	20.8	11.2
Women	20.3	47.0	32.7
Teenagers	42.1	28.5	29.4
Comics			
Men	65.8	20.4	13.8
Women	63.5	21.6	14.9
Teenagers	75.1	11.6	13.3
Financial			
Men	29.1	39.3	31.6
Women	13.1	35.2	51.7
Teenagers	5.4	20.7	73.9
Want ad			
Men	31.5	52.2	16.3
Women	26.3	58.4	15.3
Teenagers	16.0	42.6	41.4

Respondents estimated the minutes they spent reading the World-Herald as follows:

Men	40 minutes
Women	39 minutes
Teenagers	21 minutes

(World-Herald Daily Readership Survey, 1965.)

Chapter 4

READERSHIP BY TEENAGERS

For summaries of previous research about the subject matter of this chapter, see "News Research For Better Newspapers," (1966), pages 48-58.

Texas Teenagers Tell the Content They Want in a Column or Section

Davis and Watkins, of the University of Texas School of Communications, in 1960, administered questionnaires to 4,493 teenagers in 193 Texas high schools which were selected by a stratified random sampling method. The sex breakdown was males 48%; females 52%.

The ages were:

13 years and under	1%	17 years	41%
14 years	3	18 years	14
15 years	10	19 years and over	2
16 years	28		

The average (median) age was about 17 years, two months. The students were in these classes: Seniors 49%; Juniors 34%; Sophomores 11%; and Freshmen 4%.

The teenagers were asked how interested they would be in nineteen different kinds of subject-matter "if articles about them appeared in your newspaper." The "very interested" and "fairly interested" percentages are shown separately in Table 1. The items are arranged in a descending order of scores when the "very interested" and "fairly interested" responses are combined.

Some of the data in Table 1 were broken down by sex. The combined "very interested" and "fairly interested" responses were as follows:

	Male	Female
Story on teen-age fashions	57%	96%
Gossip column	59	84
Sketch of outstanding teacher or principal	53	80
Advice for going to college	85	92
Advice for following a career	86	98
Current news that affects teenagers	85	96
News about faculty members	44	69

High school teachers generally disapprove personality gossip columns in school newspapers.

Columns

Respondents were asked would they be likely to read each of ten different kinds of columns. The answers are in Table 2.

When "very likely" and "fairly likely" scores were combined for the fashion column the scores were males 48%; females 52%; for a "Dear Abby" type of column, males 55%, females 90%.

Representative Headlines

The questionnaire listed seven headlines and respondents were asked which they would be likely to read. The "very likely" percentages are presented in Table 3 broken down by senior and freshman classes. There is some indication that, as the child becomes older, he becomes more interested in each of the types of news represented by the headlines except the "Local Girl Marries" item.

Boys and girls were equally interested in all of the types of news except those represented by "Stock Jumps 6 Points" (6% male and 4% female) and "Local Girl Marries" (21% male, 55% female).

The teenagers were also asked how their local newspaper reported news of young people. Eighteen per cent said their paper had a teenage column, 19% said a teenage page, and 55% said teenage news was scattered throughout the paper.

The teenagers said they would like for such news to be reported in one of these ways:

A daily column 62%; a weekly page 28%; or scattered through the paper 10%.

Forty-seven per cent said they would like to have such news written by a high school student; 26% said they would prefer the news be written by a newspaper reporter; and 16% said they didn't care.

Table 1

	Very Interested	Fairly Interested
Current news that affects teenagers	61%	29%
Advice for following a career	65	25
Advice for going to college	63	24
Story on high school football team	60	25
Story on good grooming	44	36
Social notes on parties	44	36
Special award given to student	39	40
News about teenagers in other places	41	38
Story on teenage fashion	51	26
How to have a "fun" party	42	34

(Continued on next page)

	Very Interested	Fairly Interested
Sketch of outstanding student	36	40
Story on special assembly	32	42
Story on high school dance	39	34
Gossip column	43	29
Activities of student government	28	43
Story on students who work	24	42
Sketch of outstanding teacher or principal	23	43
News about school alumni	23	42
News about faculty members	15	41

Table 2

	Very Likely	Fairly Likely
Survey of teenage opinions	70%	24%
Advice column especially for teenagers	65	27
Sports column	50	34
Book column	31	47
Television review column	25	48
Advice column such as "Dear Abby"	45	27
Fashion column	38	24
Hollywood gossip column	26	34
Political column	12	24
Good recipes column	14	24

Table 3

	All	Seniors	Freshmen
Congress Passes New Law	26%	30%	16%
British Re-elect Conservatives	5	5	5
Stocks Jump 6 Points	5	5	3
H.S. Athlete Dies	77	80	62
New Cure Found for Cancer	72	76	55
Local Girl Marries	38	39	40
City to Get New Streets	23	25	16

(Norris G. Davis and Sue Watkins, Teenage Readers for Texas Newspapers, 1961)

Older Teenagers Lose Some Interest in Comics and Children's Page

Daniel Starch, Ltd. of Canada studied readership by teenagers of the October 28, 1965 issue of the Hamilton (Ont.) Spectator. The issue had 80 pages.

Approximately 100 youths of each sex in each of three age groups were interviewed.

The average "page observation" for each age group was as follows ("page observation" means the readers had seen something on the page):

	Male	Female
13 to 15 years	39%	45%
16 to 17 years	39	51
18 to 20 years	46	52

Table 1 shows the "page observation" for selected pages.

TABLE 1

Male

Page		13-15	16-17	18-20
1	Front page news	75%	81%	75%
6	Editorial page	56	54	57
21	First sports page	83	84	87
41	First women's page	50	44	50
58	First entertainment page	74	73	75
73	Radio-Tv page	50	67	48
74	Children's page	75	46	71
75	Comics page	85	76	77
80	2464-line ad: introduction of 1966 Fashion Board	55	54	69

Female

Page		13-15	16-17	18-20
1	Front page news	66%	81%	79%
6	Editorial page	48	51	51
21	First sports page	49	54	62
41	First women's page	75	89	87
58	First entertainment page	83	84	84
73	Radio-Tv page	53	52	54
74	Children's page	78	73	61
75	Comics page	85	79	69
80	2464-line ad: introduction of 1966 Fashion Board	84	85	82

It will be observed that interest in the comics page and the children's page declined somewhat as the teen-agers became older. This finding is in line with previous studies.

Of all households in the sample which contained teenagers, 99.6% received the Spectator. It was found that in 86.3% of such households a teenager had read the issue surveyed.

Teenagers were also asked, "How much time did you spend watching television yesterday?" Table 2 shows that viewing television declines somewhat as the teenager becomes older.

TABLE 2

		Male	
	13-15	16-17	18-20
Watched	88.6%	81.2%	76.5%
Did not watch	9.1	18.8	22.5
No Tv in home	2.3	—	1.0
		Female	
Watched	78.8	70.8	72.2
Did not watch	20.2	28.1	25.6
No Tv in home	1.0	1.1	2.2

Of the 18 to 20 group, 60% were students. The following table compares the viewing of students and nonstudents:

	Student	Other
Watched	72.2%	82.9%
Did not watch	26.2	17.1
No Tv in home	1.6	—

Interests of Boys, 14 to 16

The University of Michigan Survey Research Center in 1955, made a national survey of adolescent boys for the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

The sample was of 1,045 boys 14 to 16 years old who were in school (90% of all boys of these ages are in school).

Two of the questions asked were about activities which the boys had engaged in and had "particularly enjoyed." A list of 31 activities was presented.

Table 1 shows the rank order of enjoyment and percentage of boys who had engaged in each activity. Some activities are reported and discussed by newspapers and some are not.

TABLE 1

	Rank Order Of Enjoyment	% Who Have Engaged In
Swimming	1	87
Hunting, shooting	2	81
Working on car, motorcycle	3	60
Baseball	4	85
Basketball	5	81
Football	6	73
Fishing	7	81
Camping, hiking	8.5	60
Pool, billiards	8.5	26
Horseback riding	10	40
Boating, sailing	11	53
Raising animals, pets	12	59
Dancing	13	60
Playing musical instrument	14	32
Skiing, ice skating	15.5	41
Bowling	15.5	33
Golf	17	20
Making things	18	58
Parties	19	74
Going to movies	20	92
Watching Tv	21	84
Roller skating	22.5	59
Photography	22.5	32
Listening to radio, records	24	86
Reading (not school work)	25	76
Collecting things—stamps, etc.	26	33
Meeting friends at drug store, soda shop, etc.	27	60
Ping pong	28	53
Playing cards and games	29	69
Gardening	30	46
Tennis	31	19

An interesting finding is the percentage of boys who had never engaged in certain activities (e.g., 26% had never attended a party).

The low rank order of enjoyment of certain activities is also interesting (e.g., going to the movies, watching TV, listening to radio and records, and reading outside of school).

The boys were also asked, "What do you read for fun?" The results were as follows:

Novels, mysteries	26%
Travel, adventure, science fiction, outdoor stories	26
Comics, joke books	25
Newspapers, magazines	18
Sports, hobby books	10
Technical, scientific literature	6
Social, political history, biography, theology	5
Animal stories	5
Other and not ascertained	4
Did not mention any	21

The survey also found that 31% of the boys did not belong to any organization—national, school, social or religious club or organization.

(A Study of Adolescent Boys, 1955)

Newspaper Readership by Omaha Teenagers

In connection with its Consumer Analysis last October, the Omaha World-Herald had 650 teenagers answer a questionnaire. The readership of certain pages was as follows:

Comics pages	90.5%
Amusement pages	88.0
News pages	85.5
Sports pages	74.0
Women's pages (girls)	76.0

Age made little difference as to the readership of the amusement and comics pages, but it made some difference as to the other pages, as the accompanying table shows:

	13-14 Years	15-16 Years	17-18 Years
News			
Male	75%	79%	84%
Female	76	84	87
Sports			
Male	69	85	86
Female	44	58	66
Women's			
Female	59	69	87

The amount of reading of each of the pages was as follows:

	Read a lot	Read some	Not much	Didn't read
Male				
Comics pages	56%	24%	8%	12%
Amusement pages	39	42	8	11
News pages	13	55	16	16
Sports pages	55	26	5	14
Women's pages	3	2	6	89
Female				
Comics pages	62	28	3	12
Amusement pages	39	41	7	13
News pages	14	46	27	13
Sports pages	10	34	18	38
Women's pages	28	32	16	24

An interesting fact in the table above is that 40% of the girls read nothing or very little on the women's pages.

Readership of the new youth section (peach colored) was as follows:

	13-14 Years	15-16 Years	17-18 Years
Male	56%	83%	79%
Female	81	87	76

The teenagers were also asked "What advertising sources do you generally depend on for the things you buy?" The answers were as follows:

	Male	Female
Newspaper	51%	61%
Radio	13	6
Television	20	8
Magazine	11	21
No answer	5	4
	100	100

To this question, both boys (30%) and girls (18%) in the 13-14 age group specified television, but television was specified less often as age increased: males in the 17-18 age group, 19%; females, 6%.

Sub-Teenage Readership

The Hagerstown (Md.) Morning Herald and Daily Mail conducted a survey in June 1964 of the reading of 452 children between the ages of 10 and 15. They found that 431 (95.4%) were regular readers of one of the newspapers.

The survey was by personal interview but not by the standard method. The interviewers had a book of clippings of various kinds of news and samples of features to assist recognition. Each child was asked which of the features and which kinds of news he or she read "regularly."

Some of the findings from the Daily Mail (evening) are presented here. Not presented is data on those items in which there was considerable inconsistency between reading of the morning and the evening newspaper. The findings about reading of general news cannot be interpreted because they vary so much from scores obtained in a conventional readership study of "yesterday's" newspaper and are inconsistent as to the two newspapers.

The data presented here gives some indication of what the sub-teenager (10-12 years) reads and the changes that occur as he or she grows older (13-15 years).

The first six items in Table 1 are those in which there is an increase in reading as the child grows older. The remaining items are those in which there is either a decline in interest or no significant change.

The percentage who read the Daily Mail more than 15 minutes a day was as follows:

	10-12	13-15	Increase
Boys	52.6%	70.5%	34%
Girls	50.0	64.4	28

TABLE 1

	Boys		Girls	
	10-12	13-15	10-12	13-15
H.S. football stories	52.6%	86.9%	39.7%	62.9%
H.S. baseball stories	61.4	85.2	29.3	53.2
H.S. basketball stories	56.1	75.4	25.9	58.1
Teen-age Forum	26.3	59.0	50.0	79.0
Ann Landers	19.3	37.7	65.5	95.2
Weddings	29.8	39.3	77.6	87.1
Cross-word puzzle	38.6	34.4	31.0	22.6
Comics (average of 14)	41.2	30.0	41.0	36.0
Tv Listings	33.3	34.4	50.0	46.8
Movie ads	92.9	90.2	93.1	85.5
National baseball results	85.9	90.2	29.3	21.0
Golf stories	42.1	49.2	12.1	12.9

As Sub-Teenagers' TV Viewing Increases So Does Their Newspaper Reading

When Research Services, Inc., in August 1960, interviewed a sample of 800 children 8 to 12 years of age about their readership of the Denver Post. these questions were asked: "Did you watch any television yesterday?" (If yes) "How much time would you say you spent watching television?"

The results were as follows:

Less than 1 hour	22%
1 to 2 hours	33
More than 2 hours	33
Nonviewers	12
	100

The median estimated time for all children (including the non-viewers) was 1 hour and 51 minutes.

How television was related to their reading of the daily Post is shown in the following table:

	READ POST	
Of those watching TV:	15 mins. or less	More than 15 mins.
Less than 1 hour	78%	22%
1 to 2 hours	73	27
More than 2 hours	69	31
Nonviewers	67	33

The table shows that newspaper reading time increases with the amount of tv viewing. (Non-viewers, however, spend about the same amount of time reading as do heavy viewers.) This finding is in line with other studies of children's communication behavior which have found that tv viewing by the average child does not subtract from his newspaper reading.

More Sub-Teenagers Read Sunday Than Daily Newspaper

Research Services, Inc., in August, 1960, interviewed in their homes a representative sample of 800 children between 8 and 12 years of age whose parents were subscribers, about their readership of the Denver Post. (August is an "outdoor" month).

The survey found that 92% had read either "yesterday's" daily or last Sunday's Post. Reading of the daily was as follows:

Read it	59%
Did not read it	41

Combined daily and Sunday readership was as follows:

Both daily and Sunday	55%
Sunday only	33
Daily only	4
Neither	8

Sunday and daily readership were related in this way:

Of those who	Read Sunday	Did Not Read Sunday	
Read the daily	93%	7%	100%
Did not read the daily	80	20	100%

The percentage of children who read the daily Post increased with age—due to improved reading skills and broadened interests—as the following table shows:

All children	59%
Boys	61
Girls	57
8 years	47
9 years	56
10 years	57
11 years	67
12 years	68

It will be observed that the increases between 8 and 9 years and 10 and 11 years are 9% and 10%.

Estimated time spent reading the daily Post for all ages was as follows:

15 minutes or less	72%
16 to 30 minutes	22
More than 30 minutes	6
	100

The median time was 10.4 minutes.

The children were asked: "What are some of the things you definitely recall reading in the daily Post (last Sunday's Post)?" The results were as follows:

	Daily	Sunday
Comics	91%	98%
Roto supplements	—	41
Front page/headlines	31	19
TV-radio-movies	24	17
Sports pages	18	14
Women's pages	7	5
Advertising	3	3

There is a high reliability in these findings because the interviewing was done personally in the home (outside the presence of the parents), on a large and representative sample, and the questions were pegged to yesterday's and last Sunday's papers. The interviewers carried copies of the newspapers to assist recognition.

Sub-Teenagers Prefer Comics That Are "Funny" and Exciting

When Research Services, Inc., in August 1960, interviewed 800 youngsters 8 to 12 years old whose parents subscribed to the Denver (Colo.) Post, the Post was publishing 22 comics on its comics page and six additional comics on a special kid comics page (e.g., Freddy, Donald Duck, Mickey Mouse).

The children read slightly more than one-half of the "regular" comics. The ten rated highest by the youngsters had an average score of 52%.

This compared with an average score for the six kid comics of 76%.

The main difference between the two kinds of comics as perceived by the youngsters are indicated by their reasons for liking and not liking certain comics.

Liking: (1) General humor; (2) specific character appeal; and (3) excitement and suspense.

Not liking: (1) Are not funny or amusing; (2) lack of action or excitement; and (3) lack of understanding or interest.

Some typical criticisms were: It isn't funny (or happy) . . . . It's crazy (or silly or dumb or square) . . . . Doesn't make sense—must be written for adults . . . . and It's boring. Nothing happens.

Milwaukee Journal Survey

The Milwaukee Journal, in the summer of 1965, measured the readership of Sunday comics by adults and teenagers (i.e., children under 18 years of age). Most of the 21 comics were also published daily.

Some of the differences between adult and teen-ager preferences are shown in the following table which exhibits the ranking of eleven comics. In some instances, it will be observed that a strip ranked low by teen-agers ranked high for adults, and vice versa.

	Children	Men	Women	All Readers
Priscilla's Pop	1	*2	1	1
Beetle Bailey	2	1	*10	5
Blondie	3	4	7	2
Nancy	*4	*7	5	*3
Freddy	*4	13	9	6
There Oughta Be a Law	6	*2	6	*3
Hi and Lois	7	18	15	14
Andy Capp	8	10	12	12
The Jackson Twins	9	20	13	16
Little Abner	10	17	*17	15
Rex Morgan, M.D.	19	*2	*7	*7

*Tied with another comic

Is the 'Front Page Teenager' Treated Favorably or Unfavorably?

Two surveys of teen-agers in 1959 and 1960 revealed that a good many teen-agers condemned newspapers for playing up unsavory news about members of their age group. Many objected to being identified with the "front-page teen-ager."

Stensaas made a content analysis of the front-page news about youths between the ages of 12 and 18 in ten South Dakota dailies. He analyzed 1,100 stories in 949 consecutive issues. Considering the whole story as a unit, he categorized the individual stories as favorable, unfavorable or neutral. He differentiated stories with multiple-deck and single-deck headlines and stories with or without illustration.

The results were as follows:

	Multiple Deck and/or Illustration	Single Deck Without Illustration	All Stories
Favorable	53.7%	46.3%	40.0%
Unfavorabie	36.8	63.2	31.7
Neutral	38.0	62.0	28.2

As the table shows, the favorable stories were better displayed than the unfavorable stories. However, favorable content was more often about groups and unfavorable content about individuals.

A breakdown of the data by individual newspapers shows that six of the dailies published more unfavorable than favorable stories. Four dailies published more favorable than unfavorable stories.

All of the dailies, however, gave more display to favorable stories.

Boys made front page news three times more often than did girls. The chances were three to two, however, that boys would be mentioned unfavorably and chances were nearly two to one that girls would be mentioned favorably.

(H. S. Stensaas, "The Front-Page Teen-ager: How 10 Dailies Treat Him," Journalism Quarterly, 38:373-375, 1961.)

The "Front Page Teenager" Myth

Prior to conducting a statewide study of 4,493 Texas teenagers concerning their newspaper readership preferences, Davis and Watkins, of the University of Texas School of Communications, in 1960, ran a pilot study in Travis County.

In numerous instances in the pilot study, teenagers said they were tired of reading about bad teenagers and wanted more news about teenagers who did "something good."

Children 13 to 17 years old are 9% of the population but account for 18% of all arrests made. The FBI reported on July 28, 1966 that arrests of persons under 18 for serious crimes had increased 47% since 1960 while the population of that age group had increased only 17%.

As a part of the statewide study, Davis and Watkins presented nine headlines and respondents were asked how likely they were to read them. Two of the headlines were administered on a split-half basis. They were:

High School Student Arrested Last Night
and
High School Student Given Award

The percentage of "very likely" responses was 77% for the "arrest" story and 57% for the "award" story.

Omaha World-Herald Study

The Omaha (Neb.) World-Herald recently analyzed its news columns for one month. It found that, for every inch of unfavorable youth news, 26 inches of positive news were printed. For each time a youth was mentioned unfavorably, 91 names were used favorably. Favorable youth items outnumbered unfavorable 638 to 64. The score on pictures was 301 to 2.

The World-Herald's study also showed that approximately 335 columns of space were devoted to positive youth articles as compared with about 12 columns on the negative side. Only 45 names appeared on the "bad" side as compared with 4,121 used in a complimentary way.

(Norris Davis and Sue Watkins, Teenage Readers for Texas Newspapers, 1961)

Chapter 5

SOME COMMUNICATION BEHAVIOR

For summaries of previous research about the subject matter of this chapter, see "News Research For Better Newspapers," (1966), pages 59-66.

Communication Behavior of the Elderly

Very elderly men prefer the print media. Very elderly women prefer comics more than do women in their sixties.

Wilbur Schramm, in 1960-61, studied the communication behavior of elderly people in the San Francisco Bay Area. They were not "shut-ins," but were members of a senior citizens club, and they used the clubhouse. The sample size was 816 of whom 71.8% were women.

Most of the respondents kept a diary of their daily communication behavior. Some of the data are shown by age differences in Table 1.

TABLE 1

Men	**60-69**	**70-79**	**80 and older**
Reading, hours	1.8	2.2	2.8
Television, hours	1.8	2.0	1.9
Radio, hours	0.9	1.0	1.1
Subtotal	(4.5)	(5.2)	(5.8)
No. of magazines read	2.6	2.9	3.3
Read newsp. regularly (%)	86.1	91.4	96.3
Women			
Reading, hours	1.9	1.9	1.8
Television, hours	2.1	2.3	2.0
Radio, hours	0.9	0.9	0.8
Subtotal	(4.9)	(5.1)	(4.6)
No. of magazines read	3.4	3.4	3.1
Read newsp. regularly (%)	83.6	82.9	73.0

The table shows that men allocated more time to communication behavior as their age increased—from 4.5 hours for men in their sixties to 5.8 hours for the very elderly. The use of print media by men also increased with age. For women, the differences by age group are not as clear.

The preference for print media by the very elderly is shown in Table 2, which is a ranking of the media in response to a question as to which medium the respondent valued most.

TABLE 2

Rank	60-69	70-79	80 and older
	Men		
1	TV	Newsp.	Newsp.
2	Newsp.	TV	Mag.
3	Books/radio	Books/mag.	TV
	Women		
1	TV	TV	Newsp.
2	Newsp.	Newsp.	Mag.
3	Books	Books	Radio/TV

Table 3 shows that the more highly educated elderly people prefer print media, although the time they allocate to communication behavior is no more than that of the less educated. In analyzing this data, which is for the combined sexes, one should keep in mind that 71.8% of the sample are women.

TABLE 3

	High School or less	Some College or more
Reading, hours	1.9	2.3
Television, hours	1.9	1.4
Radio, hours	1.0	1.0
Subtotal	(4.8)	(4.7)
No. of mags. read	2.9	4.0
Read newsp. regularly (%)	82.8	87.8
Read a book in last year (%)	61.0	81.6

Table 4 exhibits a rank order of certain kinds of preferred newspaper content. For men, age does not appear to influence the preferences. But for women, it appears that the older they are the higher they rank comics.

TABLE 4

Men

Rank	60-69	70-79	80 and older
1	Local news	Local news	Local news
2	State nat'l.	State nat'l.	State nat'l.
3	Foreign	Foreign	Foreign
4	Editorials	Editorials	Editorials
5	Sports	Accidents	Accidents
6	Business	Sports	Sports
7	Columns	Business	Business
8	Accidents	Columns	Columns
9	Comics	Crime	Crime
10	Crime	Comics	Comics

(continued on next page)

Rank	60-69	70-79	80 and older
11	Class. ads	Class. ads	Display ads
12	Display ads	Display ads	Class. ads
13	Social	Social	Social
		Women	
1	Local news	Local news	Local news
2	State nat'l.	Editorials	Editorials
3	Editorials	State nat'l.	Foreign
4	Foreign	Foreign	State nat'l.
5	Columns	Columns	Columns
6	Business	Accidents	Accidents
7	Accidents	Business	Comics
8	Social	Social	Business
9	Crime	Crime	Social
10	Display ads	Sports	Crime
11	Class. ads	Comics	Class. ads
12	Comics	Display ads	Display ads
13	Sports	Class. ads	Sports

The Nature of Rumor

Rumor is defined by Webster as "a story current but not authenticated." One of the basic conditions for the circulation of rumor is that the true facts be clothed in ambiguity. Rumor thrives in the absence of adequate standards of evidence because the human mind finds it difficult to accept ambiguity. The mind has to believe something; as the psychologists say, the mind "makes an effort after meaning."

The chief medium for the circulation of rumor is word-of-mouth. How the process operates has been demonstrated by experiments. The distortion of fact, as the rumor is passed along, takes the forms of what psychologists have called "leveling," "sharpening," and "assimilation."

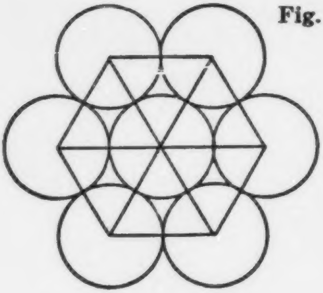

Fig. 1

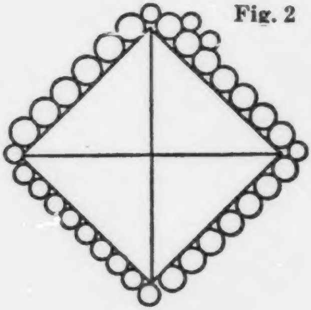

Fig. 2

The two figures on page 58 (from Bartlett) illustrate the first two forms. "Leveling" is the elimination in the memory trace of some of the details and "sharpening" is the accentuation or elaboration of one or more of the details. Thus, the particular subject who was shown Fig. 1 and later was asked to reproduce it from memory (Fig. 2) skeletonized some of the angular features ("leveling") and elaborated the circles ("sharpening").

During World War II, Allport and Postman conducted several experiments by having a succession of six or seven subjects reproduce descriptions of drawings of scenes. The subway scene (Fig. 3) is an example.

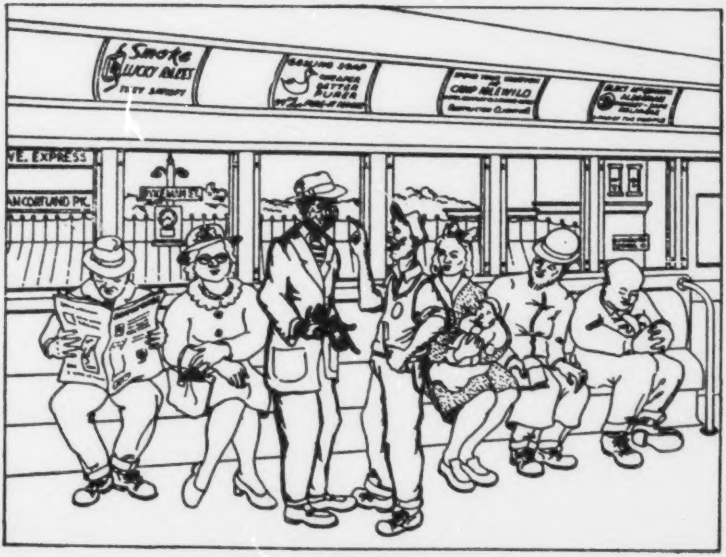

Fig. 3

Several subjects were told to leave the room, to return one at a time when summoned and to listen carefully to what they would hear.

After the subjects had left the room, one was summoned back and the experimenter exhibited a slide of the subway scene drawing on a screen. The first subject was placed at a position where he could not see the screen. The experimenter assigned a narrator to describe the scene for the first subject, requesting the narrator to include about twenty details.

Then a second subject was summoned and placed beside the first subject. The first subject told the second subject what he had just heard about the scene from the narrator. Then a third subject was summoned and listened to the description by the second subject, and this procedure continued until the last subject had heard the description.

Here is the initial description from the scene as recorded in one experiment:

> "This is a picture of an elevated train stopping at Dykeman Street. Evidently an Avenue Express. It shows the interior of the train with five people seated and two standing. There are the usual advertising signs above the windows. One is about smoking a certain cigarette, one is a soap ad, another about some camp, another is a political ad for a certain McGinnis for Alderman. Seated is a man with a hat on and a newspaper. He is a funny, rounded man engrossed in his newspaper. Next to him is a woman with a shopping bag on her right arm, eyeglasses and a funny hat. Then there is some empty space, and in front of it a Negro in a zoot suit, pork-pie hat and loud tie, talking with a defense worker wearing old clothes: overalls, high boots, sleeveless sweater, and cap. He seems to be a shipyard worker, has a razor in his left hand and is evidently arguing with the Negro. Next person sitting is a woman with a small baby in her arms, watching the two men in their argument. She is commonly dressed and has long hair. Sitting next to her is a man in a cloak, a Jewish rabbi, reading a book, with a funny hat. He is wearing a long coat, not modern. Sitting next to him is a fat man, fast asleep, with his hands clasped."

Here is the reproduction of the initial description by the third subject (who had heard it from the second subject):

> "This is a scene inside a car at Dykeman Street. There are seven people in the car, five sitting and two standing. Among the signs is a political one for a man named McGinnis. People standing are a fat man and a woman with a baby. Sitting down are two men, then a space, then a woman and two defense workers having an argument. One is a colored man with a zoot suit who has a razor in his hand. The argument must be pretty heated."

The third reproduction (as did subsequent reproductions) shows a considerable amount of "leveling"; that is, the omission of a good many details.

It also shows "sharpening" in that the advertisement for aldermanic candidate McGinnis is mentioned specifically, although none of the other ads were. (The experimenters explain this by the fact that the subjects in this particular experiment had an instructor with a similar name. Experimenters have found that names are among the most unstable elements of a story).

The reproduction also shows a third process in the diffusion of rumor which psychologists call "assimilation." This is a form of distortion due to emotional or intellectual context in the subject's mind. Thus, the third reproduction is an instance of either prejudice or stereotyping: the razor is transferred from the hand of the defense worker to the hand of the Negro. (Use of the razor as a weapon is a common stereotype of the Negro).

When six children were subjects in this same experiment none of them mentioned the razor and only one mentioned the Negro.

These experiments not only explain the nature of rumor, but suggest some of the pitfalls in news reporting; for the report of some events is second- or third-hand.

(Sir Frederic C. Bartlett, Remembering, Cambridge, England, 1932, 1954; and G. W. Allport and L. Postman, The Psychology of Rumor, Henry Holt & Company, New York, 1947.)

Where Do People Get Science Information?

When the University of Michigan Survey Research Center conducted a nationwide study in 1958 for the National Association of Science Writers, it asked, "From which of these sources do you get **most** of your science information—newspapers, magazines, radio or television?"

After the 17% who said they could recall nothing at all about science from any medium were excluded, the results were as follows:

Newspapers	41%
Television	27
Magazines	25
Radio	4
More than one medium	3
	100

Respondents were also asked what their primary source for general news and entertainment was. The comparison is shown in the accompanying table. (For science information, the table excludes the 17% who did not recall science items in any medium and those who did not answer the questions.)

	Newsps.	Mags.	Radio	TV
General news	57%	4%	16%	22%
Science items	34	21	3	22
Entertainment	5	6	14	74

How education effected the choice of media for science information is shown in the table below:

	Grade School	Completed H. S.	Some College or More
Newspapers	27%	38%	39%
Magazines	9	26	43
Radio	4	2	1
Television	22	24	15
Read/saw no science	35	6	1
Not answered	3	4	1
	100	100	100

(Science, the News and the Public. Text by Hillier Krieghbaum. Copyright 1958 by National Assn. of Science Writers, Inc.)

Change in Media Use in Aurora, Illinois

When a profile-of-the-audience study was done in August, 1965 for the Aurora (Ill.) Beacon-News by Anthony J. Scantlen of Copley International Corporation, the 500 readers in the (two-stage random) sample were asked about the amount of time they devoted to newspapers, radio and television as "compared with a year ago at this time."

The results were as follows:

	Newsp.	Radio	TV
Spending less time now	9.0%	18.0%	39.2%
Spending about the same amount of time now.....	73.6	57.0	50.4
Spending more time now...	17.4	24.4	9.4
Other responses, don't know	—	0.6	1.0
	100.0	100.0	100.0

In April, 1965 Louis Harris asked a national sample of the adult population: "Do you and your family tend to look at television more or less than you did a few years ago?" The results were:

Less	33%
About the same	31
More	34
Own no TV	2

Considering only adults who reported spending more time or less time with television, the breakdown of the Harris respondents by demographic characteristics was as follows:

	Less time	More time
Average adult	33%	34%
Suburban residents	38	26
21-24 age group	40	34
$10,000 and over income	48	22
Small town residents	23	43
Grade-school educated	26	34
50 and over age group	20	44
$5,000 and under income	25	42

(The Aurora Market: A Profile of the Audience of the Aurora Beacon-News, December, 1965)

The Use of Media as Adult Education

Parker and Paisley, in 1965, made a study of "Patterns of Information Seeking in Adult Education" on behalf of the United States Office of Education. Respondents were in San Mateo and Fresno, California.

Some of their findings relate to the use of the newspaper and other mass media.

One question, asked in San Mateo, was "What would you say are some of the reasons you read a newspaper? A magazine? Listen to radio? Watch TV?" The findings were as follows:

Reasons:	Newspapers	Magazines	Radio	TV
Information or practical use	75%	54%	24%	15%
Relaxation or habit	12	25	43	70
Contact or prestige	2	1	6	5
Not answered	12	20	27	11
	101	100	100	101

The following question was also asked in San Mateo: "Sometimes the communication media we've been talking about offer readily available and practical education. From your experience, would you say this is true of newspapers? Magazines? Radio? TV?"

Medium Used for:	Newspapers	Magazines	Radio	TV
News	38%	14%	20%	17%
Tools for daily living	7	21	1	2
Gen'l information or education	15	26	11	36
Other	1	2	3	2
Not answered	39	37	64	41
	100	100	99	98

The following question was asked in Fresno: "Sometimes a person turns to a newspaper to find some particular information that he expects to be there. Can you remember doing this recently—that is, looking in a newspaper for some **specific** information? What were you looking for?" The results:

News or weather	17%
Statistics, financial news, farm reports	16
Advertisements	14
Hobbies, sports, entertainment	4
Educational items	3
Other things	3
None or no response	43
	100

(E. B. Parker and W. J. Paisley, "Patterns of Adult Information Seeking." Institute for Communication Research, Stanford University, Sept., 1966)

Chapter 6

TYPOGRAPHY

Why All-Cap Headlines Are Less Legible Than c&lc

Breland and Breland, in 1944, selected 120 five-word, single-column headlines from the New York Times. Each headline was printed on newsprint stock in 24-point Cheltenham Bold Extra-Condensed in (1) all-caps and (2) caps and lower case.

Subjects were exposed to the headlines for a period of 1-20 second at a distance of 15 inches from the subjects' eyes. The number of words they read was recorded.

It was found that the all-caps headlines, on the average, were 18.9 per cent less legible than the caps and lower case headlines.

In the same year, Earl English did a similar experiment. He compared headlines set in all-caps and in caps and lower case in Cheltenham Bold, using both Cheltenham Regular and Cheltenham Condensed.

The mean number of words read under each condition was:

All-caps Cheltenham Regular	4.33
C and lc Cheltenham Regular	5.22
C and lc Cheltenham Condensed	5.11

The average loss in legibility for the all-caps headlines was 18 per cent—about the same loss that Breland and Breland had found.

English's subjects' eyes were 14 inches from the headlines flashed by a chronoscope.

Banner Headlines

Paterson and Tinker cite an unpublished thesis by Warren, who compared all-caps and caps and lower case headlines set in 60-point Memphis Bold and viewed at a distance of 6 to 8 feet.

Warren found that the caps and lower case banner headlines were significantly more legible than the all-caps headlines at the distance from which many persons on the street pass a newsstand.

Why All-Caps Are Less Legible

Tinker's several experiments explain why all-caps headlines are not as legible as headlines printed in caps and lower case.

1. Reading is facilitated when the text is perceived in **word units rather than in letter units. When text is set in lower case the word form is more distinctive than when it is set in caps.**

material deleted due
to copyright
restrictions

Fig. 1
(From M. A. Tinker, Bases for Effective Reading.
Copyright 1965 University of Minnesota Press)

A glance at Fig. 1 shows that in the word "stopped," printed in all-caps, the letters are of uniform height and are in straight horizontal alignment; they are perceived largely letter by letter. But the same word in lower case—in roman, italic and boldface—has a distinct configuration, and is perceived as a word unit.

(Numerals, however, are a special case).

2. A second explanation, according to Tinker, is that matter in all-caps covers about 35 per cent more printing surface than the same matter in lower case. In an eye movement study by Tinker and Paterson, a large increase was found in the number of fixation pauses when matter in all-caps was substituted for matter in lower case.

3. A third explanation, according to Tinker, is that, since nearly everything we read is printed in lower case, that form is more familiar.

(Earl English, "A Study of the Readability of Four Newspaper Headline Types," Journalism Quarterly, 21:217-229, 1944; Miles A. Tinker, Bases for Effective Reading, 1965).

Square Serif Headline is Less Legible Than Roman and Sans-Serif

Earl English tested the reading speed for one-column headlines set in a roman, a sans-serif and a square serif type, and found that the square serif was the least legible.

Subjects, under very rigorous experimental conditions, were exposed to headlines flashed by a chronoscope. The *sizes were 14-point, 24-point and 30-point.*

The type designs were Bodoni bold (roman), Tempo medium (sans-serif) and Karnak bold (square serif).

The mean number of words read in about one-half of a second were as follows:

Tempo	5.38
Bodoni	5.18
Karnak	4.22

This means that the subjects read 21% fewer words in reading Karnak than in reading Tempo and 18% fewer words in reading Karnak than in reading Bodoni. The difference between Tempo and Bodoni is not statistically significant.

Readers reported 28 words incorrectly in reading Karnak and 15 and 13 in reading Bodoni and Tempo, respectively.

(Earl English, "A Study of the Readability of Four Newspaper Headline Types," Journalism, Quarterly, 21:217-229, 1944.)

Aesthetic Qualities of Type Faces

Brinton and Blankenburg, in 1958, used a "semantic differential" scale to ascertain from two different groups their judgment of the aesthetic qualities of certain type faces.

The groups were (1) "professionals" (printers and commercial artists) and (2) "laymen" (students).

Thirteen different type faces were set in 24-point in one line on thirteen separate sheets. Below the type were 26 scales, which were pairs of polar adjectives (e.g., ornate/plain, masculine/feminine). The subjects checked one of the seven intervals at some point between each pair of adjectives.

The table at the end of this summary lists the adjectives which each group used to describe the qualities of each type face.

The complete list of polar adjectives was as follows:

imperfect/perfect
hard/soft
old/new
ornate/plain
constrained/free
passive/active
bad/good
strong/weak
light/dark
rounded/angular
beautiful/ugly
rich/poor
complex/simple
feminine/masculine
old-fashioned/modern
meaningful/meaningless
expensive/cheap
usual/unusual
rugged/delicate
graceful/awkward
tight/loose
dirty/clean
formal/informal
honest/dishonest
harmonious/dissonant
relaxed/stiff

There was a general overall similarity in the key adjectives used by both groups to describe most of the faces.

The greatest difference between the two sets of judges was in the greater length of the professionals' list for most faces. For example, the "laymen" used only six adjectives to describe Garamond (agreeing with the "professionals" in five instances); but the professionals added nine more adjectives. The laymen did not perceive any of those nine qualities in Garamond.

There was also a greater consistency in the responses of the individual professionals. They showed less variation in their judgments than did the individual laymen.

Where there are differences in the descriptions by the two groups, which description should be used in selecting a type face for a specific use? The experimenters answer that question as follows:

"In those cases where the profiles generally agree but where the professionals ascribe additional qualities, it would probably be better to rely more on the sensitive judgment of the professionals.

"However, where there is actual disagreement, such as in the Cheltenham and Karnak cases, one might want to go against the judgment of the professionals. Certainly laymen attribute very desirable qualities to these faces."

Suitability for Subject-matter

Haskins, in 1957, tested the suitability of ten type faces for ten different kinds of subject-matter in the Saturday Evening Post. The types were for titles of articles; the sizes ranged from 48-point to 72-point.

The judges were a nationwide sample of the magazine's readers.

Some type faces appeared to be significantly high in "all-purpose" appropriateness. Others ranked low in "all-purpose" value but were relatively high with specific topics.

The type faces are listed in the order of their "all-purpose" value:

1. Bodoni
2. Futura Bold
3. Cheltenham Bold
4. Bodoni Open
5. Caslon Oldstyle Italic
6. Bernhard Modern Roman
7. Kaufman Bold
8. Futura Light
9. Liberty
10. Mistral

On the assumption that the individual articles tested were representative of the topics, Haskins suggests that:

1. Liberty is most appropriate for fashions. It is fine-lined, decorative and cursive.

2. Futura Bold is most appropriate for sports.

3. Bodoni and Cheltenham Bold are quite suitable for any kind of article.

TYPE FACE	CHARACTERISTICS ATTRIBUTED BY Professionals	 Laymen
Garamond	Perfect	Perfect
	Good	Good
		Plain
	Light	
	Rich	
	Beautiful	
	Rounded	
	Expensive	
	Meaningful	
	Delicate	
	Graceful	
	Clean	Clean
	Harmonious	Harmonious
	Honest	Honest
	Formal	
Garamond Bold	Perfect	Perfect
		Hard
	Old	
		Plain
	Strong	Strong
	Dark	Dark
	Masculine	Masculine
	Meaningful	
		Usual
		Rugged
	Clean	Clean
	Harmonious	Harmonious
	Honest	Honest

TYPE FACE	CHARACTERISTICS ATTRIBUTED BY	
	Professionals	Laymen
Garamond Italic	Perfect	
	Soft	Soft
	Good	
		Ornate
		Weak
	Light	Light
	Rich	
	Beautiful	
	Rounded	
	Expensive	Expensive
	Feminine	Feminine
	Meaningful	
	Delicate	Delicate
	Graceful	Graceful
	Clean	Clean
	Harmonious	
	Honest	
Bodoni Book	Perfect	Perfect
		Soft
	Good	Good
	Light	
	Rich	
	Beautiful	
	Expensive	
	Meaningful	
	Graceful	
	Tight	
	Clean	Clean
	Harmonious	Harmonious
	Honest	Honest
	Formal	
Bodoni Book Italic	Perfect	
		Soft
		Plain
	Good	Good
	Rich	Rich
	Beautiful	Beautiful
	Rounded	Rounded
	Expensive	Expensive
		Feminine
	Graceful	Graceful
	Clean	Clean
	Harmonious	Harmonious
Ultra Bodoni	Hard	Hard
	Active	
	Strong	Strong
	Dark	Dark
		Ugly
	Masculine	Masculine
	Rugged	Rugged

TYPE FACE	CHARACTERISTICS ATTRIBUTED BY	
	Professionals	Laymen
Cheltenham Bold	Imperfect	
	Hard	
	Constrained	
	Old	
		Active
	Plain	Plain
	Strong	Strong
	Dark	Dark
	Simple	Simple
	Ugly	
	Old-Fashioned	
	Cheap	
	Masculine	Masculine
	Usual	Usual
	Rugged	Rugged
		Honest
Tempo Bold	Hard	Hard
	New	
	Plain	Plain
	Good	Good
	Strong	Strong
	Dark	Dark
	Simple	Simple
	Masculine	Masculine
	Rugged	Rugged
	Honest	Honest
	Modern	
Karnak Intermediate	Hard	
	Constrained	
		Good
	Strong	
		Simple
	Masculine	
	Rugged	
	Awkward	
		Clean
		Honest
	Stiff	
Kaufman Script		Soft
	New	
	Active	
	Light	Light
		Feminine
	Modern	
	Delicate	Delicate
	Informal	

TYPE FACE	**CHARACTERISTICS ATTRIBUTED BY**	
	Professionals	**Laymen**
Typo Script	Soft	Soft
	Ornate	Ornate
		Weak
	Light	Light
	Complex	Complex
	Rich	Rich
		Beautiful
	Rounded	Rounded
	Old-fashioned	
	Expensive	Expensive
	Feminine	Feminine
	Delicate	Delicate
	Graceful	Graceful
	Clean	Clean
	Harmonious	Harmonious
	Formal	Formal
Flash	Free	
	New	
	Active	
	Strong	
	Dark	Dark
	Rounded	
	Modern	
	Cheap	
	Masculine	
	Rugged	Rugged
	Relaxed	
	Informal	Informal
Copperplate Gothic	Hard	Hard
	Constrained	
	Old	
	Plain	Plain
	Dark	
	Simple	Simple
	Masculine	Masculine
	Rugged	
	Clean	Clean
		Honest
	Stiff	
	Formal	
	Strong	Strong

(J. E. Brinton, "Measurement of Aesthetic Qualities of Type Faces," Paper presented at meeting of Association for Education in Journalism, 1958; W. B. Blankenburg, "The Aesthetics of Type-Face Design as Measured by the Semantic Differential," M.A. thesis, Stanford University, 1958; J. B. Haskins, "Testing Suitability of Typefaces for Editorial Subject-Matter," Journalism Quarterly, 35: 186-194, 1958)

‘Readability’ of Different Typographical Forms

An experiment by Scripps-Howard Newspapers’ research staff suggests that non-justification, non-hyphenation and smaller-than-standard size body type will not affect how much, how quickly or how accurately newspapers are read.

Dr. John Scott Davenport, executive assistant to the chairman of the board of Scripps-Howard Newspapers and Stewart A. Smith, director of Scripps-Howard’s Research Inc., of Ohio, in 1963-64 tested 408 adults in the Cincinnati area on eight typographical forms.

The researchers had printed eight different versions of an eight-page tabloid newspaper “The National Enterprise”, set in five 11-pica columns. The reading matter was feature material supplied by the Newspaper Enterprise Association of Cleveland. The eight typographical versions were:

9 pt. hyphenated, justified
7½ pt. hyphenated, justified
9 pt. hyphenated, non-justified
7½ pt. hyphenated, non-justified
9 pt. non-hyphenated, justified
7½ pt. non-hyphenated, justified
9 pt. non-hyphenated, non-justified
7½ pt. non-hyphenated, non-justified

An equal number of subjects, recruited from church and civic organizations, read each newspaper for 20 minutes, marked the content they had read, and answered questions that measured comprehension of the material.

By an analysis of variance design, experimenters found that the differences of number of words read and subjects’ comprehension of the content were both so small as to be non-significant statistically.

Since all respondents read for about the same length of time and since total number of words read was a measure of reading speed, speed was inferred from the number of words read.

The experimenters mention three limitations of the study:

1. Long-term effects over a period of several weeks might be different from the effects of a 20-minute reading.

2. Typographical changes in familiar reading material, such as a regularly read newspaper—as contrasted with the novel material used in the study—might either facilitate or impair readability to a significant extent.

3. Data were insufficient for differentiating as to education: While the reading skills of highly-educated persons might not be impaired by exposure to uncommon typographical forms, the reading skills of lower-educated persons might be impaired.

(J. S. Davenport and S. A. Smith, "Effects of Hyphenation, Justification and Type Size on Readability", Journalism Quarterly, 42: 382-388 (1965))

Type Size, Non-Justification More Salient Than Non-Hyphenation

Few readers are aware of non-hyphenation. More readers are aware of non-justification when the type size is 7½ point than when it is 9 point.

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The eight versions were as follows:

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9 pt. hyphenated, non-justified
7½ pt. hyphenated, non-justified
9 pt. non-hyphenated, justified
7½ pt. non-hyphenated, justified
9 pt. non-hyphenated, non-justified
7½ pt. non-hyphenated, non-justified

After the subjects had read for twenty minutes, they were asked: "Did you notice anything different about it?"

Very few subjects who read the non-hyphenated versions were aware of non-hyphenation.

However, one-fifth to one-fourth of the subjects who had been exposed to the 7½ point type made comments about the size of the type. But very few subjects who had been exposed to the 9 point form made any comment.

About 20% of the subjects who had been exposed to the non-justified versions commented on that fact.

Next, the subjects were asked to compare directly specially printed excerpts of the eight different versions. That is, each subject was handed a pair of the versions and asked to make a direct comparison of the two.

Under this condition, only 10.5% noted the difference in hyphenation; 44.5% noted the difference in justification; and 96.5% noted the difference in type size.

Subjects were then asked to rank the eight typographical versions in their order of preference. When weights, ranging from 1 to 8, were assigned the rankings, the average weighted scores were as follows:

9 pt. justified, hyphenated	1.94
9 pt. justified, non-hyphenated	2.11
9 pt. nonjustified, hyphenated	2.19
9 pt. nonjustified, non-hyphenated	3.97
7½ pt. justified, hyphenated	5.41
7½ pt. justified, non-hyphenated	5.77
7½ pt. nonjustified, hyphenated	6.58
7½ pt. nonjustified, non-hyphenated	6.89

As the table shows, type size was the most important factor in readers' preference, with respondents preferring 9 point. Justification was of less importance, with respondents preferring justification. Hyphenation was of negligible importance.

(J. S. Davenport and S. A. Smith, "Project Typeset," Scripps-Howard Research, 1964)

Chapter 7

HEADLINES

Headline Count: Should it be Assigned Arbitrarily for All Stories? Or Vary With Complexity of the Story?

This study suggests that longer count will achieve more comprehensible headlines, thus reinforcing the trend to horizontal makeup.

By
Walter Wilcox and Kathy Fearn
University of California, Los Angeles

Maximum count for headlines is usually fixed on an arbitrary basis without consideration for the nature or complexity of the story or of language rhythm.

The count is most commonly a function of makeup convenience, of typographic aesthetic value and of the need for a uniform system. In assigning count, little attention is given to the communication function.

The headline serves a number of functions, one of which is dominant and the others secondary. They are:

1. To tell what is in the story. This is the dominant function and others must revolve around it.
2. To evaluate the story with respect to other stories on the page. This is usually a matter of headline size and only incidentally of count.
3. To enhance the page typographically. Over the past several years a kind of axiom has developed: the shorter the head, the more aesthetic the typographic effect.
4. To interest the reader in the story. There is some question whether this is a function at all. The inherent interest is in the story itself, the headline being a reflection of the story and thus of the interest.

In any event, the first function—to tell what is in the story—remains the overriding function and the others should, at least in principle, be considered after the conditions of the first function are met. This function, for the purposes of study, can be reduced to two dimensions—**accuracy** and **meaning**, which are not independent variables but rather different perspectives.

Accuracy is defined as one or more inaccurate statements in a headline.

Meaning is defined as the relative precision with which the headline reflects the story.

The utility of the study, it was postulated, would be two-fold: (1) if it could be demonstrated that a short count holds up in terms of accuracy and precision, the added advantage of aesthetic value could serve as a convincing justification; and (2) if it was found that the **complexity of a** news story had some effect on the count or was correlated in some way with the count, maximum count could be established in relation to the **nature of the story** rather than arbitrarily, thus creating a more meaningful headline/story unit.

Step 1

Three leads were prepared. They were chosen at random from a number of possible leads.

Lead No. 1

> Widespread unrest on the nation's campuses is an expression of fear that the world's political leadership cannot cope with the threat of an atomic war, a Yale psychologist told the American Psychological Association yesterday.

Lead No. 1 was considered to have two components. First, that unrest on the nation's campuses was caused by the fear of war. Second, that this fear was linked to a lack of confidence in the world's political leadership. In addition, the lead contains **attribution,** which is rather important to the comprehension of the story. On a scale from abstract to concrete, this lead was designated as the most abstract of the three.

Lead No. 2

> An increase in the European Common Market tariff on frozen potatoes goes into effect today, threatening a thriving export trade from the United States.

Lead No. 2, while not a straight summary statement, was believed to contain the traditional elements: who, what, where, when, why, how—in a more or less linear manner. On the abstract/concrete scale, it falls roughly in the middle.

Lead No. 3

> South Florida residents prepared to evacuate their homes today as Hurricane Donna threatened the coast near Fort Lauderdale with winds up to 170 miles an hour.

Lead No. 3 is the most concrete, dealing as it does with natural phenomena. It contains two components but both of a much simpler nature than those in Lead No. 1. The two components are "hurricane threatens" and "residents prepare to evacuate."

Step 2

The three leads were sent to teachers in charge of editing and copyreading classes in 18 major journalism schools. (Columbia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana State, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Northwestern, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania State, Texas, Washington, Wayne State and Wisconsin).

The teachers were requested to have their students write two-line headlines of a stipulated count. The count was mixed at random so that no student would have all three short-count headlines or all three long-count headlines. A total of 861 usable headlines was received, divided approximately among the three leads and five counts, maximums of 10, 14, 18, 24 and 30 or total units of 20, 28, 36, 48 and 60.

Step 3

Three graduate students, each of whom had completed a graduate course on the copydesk, coded the headlines on two dimensions: (1) **precision** (specific-vague) as a function of meaning and (2) **accuracy** (one or more inaccurate statements). There was very close agreement among the coders.

The results were then punched into data processing cards. In addition, each word in each headline was punched into the cards. The deck was then processed on a counter-sorter and the data analyzed in a search for significant differences.

Accuracy

Hypothetically, accuracy should increase on a linear curve as the count increases because the writer has more opportunity to mirror the lead. Analysis, however, showed that this was not the case. Accuracy did not increase as the count increased. Accuracy seems to be a function of the nature of the story rather than of the count. Nor did the nature of the lead in terms of the abstract/concrete variable seem to have an explainable effect on accuracy.

Meaning

Meaning was measured on a dimension called "precision" along a three-step scale: precise, intermediate, vague. Precise was defined further as clear, concise, easy-to-understand. Intermediate simply meant that the coder could not make up his mind. Vague was defined as unclear and hard to understand.

These data were first analyzed by leads for all counts. Early in the analysis it became quite apparent that Leads 1 and 2 did not differ in any significant or substantive respect.

But they both differed quite dramatically from Lead 3. In the interest of efficiency, Leads 1 and 2 were collapsed and aligned against Lead 3, as shown in Table 1. This table shows the percentage of headlines for each count which were coded as precise, vague and intermediate.

As the table shows, the hypothesis that the overall precision increases with the length of the headline was confirmed.

But there was one startling exception: precision fell off quite dramatically from count 14 to count 18. One tenable conclusion, subject to further testing, is that the 18-count somehow is not amenable to the rhythm of headline language.

This finding suggests that, in some cases, precision is a function of the nature of the lead and not of count.

Table 1

	—COUNT—				
	10	14	18	24	30
Leads 1 and 2:					
Precise	6%	32%	16%	63%	63%
Intermediate	44	48	70	30	32
Vague	50	20	15	8	5
	100	100	101	101	99
Lead 3:					
Precise	25	69	25	67	79
Intermediate	41	22	57	26	14
Vague	34	9	18	7	6
	100	100	100	100	99

How Many Components?

The next analysis sought to determine at what point on the linear curve of increasing count a new component was introduced. It was assumed that for the 10-count headline probably only one component could be introduced and that somewhere along the line a second or even third component would begin to appear. **It might be possible to assign the length of the headline on the basis of the number of components desired** by the head of the copy desk.

The data were analyzed by leads. The key words that had been punched into the data processing cards were gathered into frequency clusters. The results are in Table 2, which shows the percentage of headlines for each count which included the components and/or attribution.

Table 2

	—COUNT—				
Lead No. 3:	10	14	18	24	30
1. Hurricane threatens Florida	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
2. People prepare to evacuate	26	32	46	63	89
Lead No. 1:					
1. Campus unrest due to fear of war	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
2. Distrust of world leadership	6	7	13	24	43
3. Attribution	0	0	17	44	63

NOTE—100% means that in all cases the copy writer included the first component. But it does not mean that his headline conformed to the criteria for accuracy and precision.

For Lead 3, the second component was introduced at the 10 count in only 26% of the headlines. Thereafter, as the count increased, it appeared in more headlines.

For Lead 1, the pattern was the same, but the second element got into fewer than one-half of the headlines even for the 30 count.

The attribution, "a Yale psychologist," was included in more headlines than was the second component for nearly all counts, indicating that a good many copyreaders used the first component and the attribution but omitted the second component. The attribution was often interchangeable with the second component.

For Lead 2 (not shown in the table), the word clusters revealed a quite different pattern. The component, "increased tariff threatens U.S. potatoes," appeared across all counts. The additional clusters as the count increased consisted merely of helper words or, perhaps, of "padding" words. The conclusion is that Lead 2 contained no new components and hence the headline was filled out with padding words which, according to the data, did not seem to contribute much in the way of accuracy but were probably valuable in terms of precision.

Ed. Note: It would be expected that experienced copy readers would have more success than the students achieved. Nevertheless, the data seem to discriminate as to varying counts for the specific leads. Readers of this bulletin might find it interesting to test themselves on Lead No. 1.

Conclusions

1. Accuracy does not increase with increased count; rather accuracy seems to be a function of the nature of the story.

2. Meaning increases along a linear curve with increased count, although 18 count appears to be a poor choice. Perhaps the count does not fit the rhythm of headline language or perhaps the copy reader at this point is striving with limited success to include a second component.

3. When two components are thought to be necessary the head of the copy desk should prescribe the count: a jump from 28 total count (2 x 14) to 48 count (2 x 24) seems to be the most efficient.

4. The difficulty of the story on an abstract/concrete scale does not seem to be correlated in a linear manner with headline count.

The findings, while far from definitive, may be considered a challenge. Will editors continue to assign arbitrary counts without respect to the nature of the story? Or especially, in view of the trend toward horizontal makeup, will editors begin to assign variable counts in the interest of greater story/headline unity?

The Effect of Headlines

When headlines and story differ, it is the "superficial" reader who is most likely to accept the interpretation suggested by the headline.

A pending libel case involves an accurate headline over a news story that is asserted to be actionable because the word "not" was inadvertently omitted from the news story which reported an acquittal in a criminal trial.

This is the reverse of the situation in which an inaccurate headline is over an accurate news story. Appellate courts have generally held that a libelous headline on an accurate story makes the story as a whole libelous. The sting of the libel is in the headline, the courts have said.

There is experimental evidence which measured the effect that a headline has on readers' interpretations of a news story. Tannenbaum, in 1953, tested two hypotheses:

1. Different headlines over the same story generate different impressions on readers.

2. The impression generated by the headline is in inverse proportion to the amount of the story that was read. That is, the more the story is read, the less the headline by itself affects the interpretation of the story; and vice versa.

The experimenter wrote a fictional trial story of seven paragraphs. He also wrote three different headlines which were designated as "guilty," "innocent" and "neutral." The headlines were:

Guilty

Admits Ownership of
Frat Murder Weapon

Innocent

Many Had Access to
Frat Murder Weapon

Neutral

Approach Final Stage
In Frat Murder Trial

The story was substituted for an actual story which had appeared on the front page of a recent issue of the Daily Iowan and the page was reproduced by offset in the three headline versions.

Approximately equal numbers of subjects read the front page in the three different versions. The 398 individual subjects read at their own pace.

The results are in the following table which shows the interpretation of the story by each type of headline reader:

	Guilty	Innocent	No Opinion	Total
Those reading the				
Guilty head	34%	16%	50%	100%
Innocent head ..	22	29	49	100
Neutral head ...	26	18	56	100

The data seem to confirm the hypothesis that the headline for some persons influences their interpretation of the story.

Extent of Reading

The experimenter next related the amount of reading to the effect of the different headlines. He did this by comparing those subjects whose opinions agreed with the headline they had read with those whose opinions differed from the headline they had read.

The results are shown in the following table which differentiates "thorough," "casual" and "superficial" readers. Those who read only the headline or the headline and the first few paragraphs were classified as "superficial" readers. The experimenter did not define "thoroughly" and "casually."

	Extent of Reading		
	Thoroughly	Casually	Superficially
Agreement with headline:			
Agreed	38%	34%	60%
Disagreed	62	66	40
	100	100	100

The main difference in the table is between those who read "superficially" and those who read "thoroughly" and "casually."

The data seem to mean that it is more often the superficial reader who gets the meaning of the story from the headline. About five-eighths of the "thorough" readers and two-thirds of the "casual" readers did not accept the interpretation suggested by the headline.

(Percy H. Tannenbaum, "The Effect of Headlines on the Interpretation of News Stories," Journalism Quarterly, 30:189-197, 1953)

Chapter 8

NEWS AND EDITORIAL POLICY

For summaries of previous research about the subject matter of this chapter, see "News Research For Better Newspapers," (1966), pages 90-107.

Traffic Violators' Names Published: 81% Approve

The Missoula (Mont.) Missoulian, in September, 1964, began publication in a column called "Good Morning, Judge" of the names of traffic offenders. Age, address, kind of violation and amount of the fine were included.

Bob Goligoski, a graduate student in the Montana State University School of Journalism, interviewed 100 of the 302 persons who had been mentioned in the column during 30 days in January and February, 1965.

In response to the question, "If you were editor of the Missoulian, would you print the names of traffic offenders?", 81 respondents said "Yes", 12 said "No" and seven were not sure.

Only two of the 13 women respondents objected to publication of their offenses.

Thirty-two respondents—of whom more than one-half were under 24 years of age—said that publication of their names had caused them to be more careful drivers.

Eighty-eight respondents said they had seen their names in the column; ten said they had not seen their names but had been told they had appeared; and two had not known their names had been published.

During the first 30 days after the column began publication of traffic offenses, 402 names were reported. For the period of the study—about four months later—the total for 30 days was only 302.

The report of the survey did not state whether any of the offenses were for drunken driving.

A staff member of the Missoulian was quoted as saying that four or five persons had pleaded unsuccessfully to keep their names out of print.

(Bob Goligoski, "Good Morning, Judge: Reactions to a Newspaper Column." Montana Journalism Review, Spring, 1965.)

Advising Readers How to Vote

In a survey of readers' attitudes of the Sharon (Pa.) Herald, conducted last October by Dr. Robert M. Pockrass, of Pennsylvania State University, one question was: "Do you think the Herald should give advice to its readers on whom and what to vote for?" The response:

Yes	31.3%
No	63.9
No opinion	4.8

The Herald is generally Republican in its editorial policy, but supported Pres. Johnson in 1964. Of the respondents, 32.7% said they generally favored the Republican party and 53.4% favored the Democratic party.

Of the Republicans, 38.2% thought the paper should give advice on voting and of the Democrats 30.6%.

Labor union members were less likely than non-union members to want the paper's advice. The comparative percentages were 26.6 and 33.8.

Typical comments of those who opposed the newspaper giving advice:

"The voter should make up his own mind after studying both sides of the issue."

"The paper should present both sides and let the voter decide for himself."

"In a one-newspaper town the paper has no right to foist its political views on the public."

Some of those who approved the paper giving advice said it was the paper's right or privilege. Others welcomed the advice because "some of us don't always understand the issues completely" and "good advice sometimes helps form the right opinion."

Ed. Note: "News Research for Better Newspapers" (1966) pp 104-107 reports opinion in other communities on this question.

California Newspapers Have Political Influence

California newspapers have exerted an influence on the political process — especially on behalf of local candidates and statewide and local ballot measures.

James E. Gregg studied the editorial endorsements by 11 California newspapers for the period of 1948-1962. The newspapers were: Bakersfield Californian, Fresno Bee, Los Angeles Times, Oakland Tribune, Redding Record-Searchlight, Sacramento Bee, San Francisco Examiner, San Francisco Chronicle, San Diego Union, Santa Barbara News-Press and Santa Rosa Press-Democrat.

For most of this period, the major political parties were not as effectively organized as they were in most states; most of the local elections were nonpartisan; a long ballot was characteristic of general statewide elections; and large numbers of migrants were entering a new political milieu. Moreover, until 1960, candidates could cross-file; that is, could file for the nomination in both major parties.

Gregg found that:

1. Editorial endorsements have greater influence on the outcome of local elections than on state or national elections.

2. Endorsements of state and local ballot measures are more influential than endorsements of candidates.

Gregg's first test of influence was the percentage of endorsed candidates who won a majority of votes in the county in which the endorsing newspaper circulates. Table 1 shows such percentages for each kind of candidacy and for ballot measures (referenda and initiatives).

Table 1

Assembly candidates	63.6%
State Senate candidates	65.0
Presidential candidates	65.0
Congressional candidates	69.3
Gov., U.S. Senate candidates	73.8
Local candidates	84.1
State measures	84.1
Local measures	85.2

His second test of influence, which he calls a "plus" rating, is a measure of the degree to which endorsed candidates and measures won greater approval in the newspaper's county than at the state-wide level. For Congressional and state legislative offices an endorsed candidate's percentage of the two-party vote was compared with his party's registration percentage. This is shown in Table 2.

Table 2

	Rating
Gov., U.S. Senate candidates	54.7
Presidential candidates	57.5
State measures	66.6
State Senate candidates	80.0
Assembly candidates	82.2

Other findings were:

1. Influence of newspaper endorsements is greatest when few other determinants can affect the voter's decision — incumbency, partisanship and volume of publicity.

2. Endorsement of a candidate of a party opposite that party which a newspaper usually supports was more effective than when the newspaper endorsed a candidate of its own party. ("Readers evidently give special attention to these endorsements").

3. Endorsed candidates (whether Republican or Democrat) ran an average of 3% to 8.8% ahead of their party's registration. Unendorsed candidates trailed their party's registration percentage by an average of 2% to 7%.

Gregg's conclusions are "that newspapers do exert an influence on the political process," and that "this influence seems especially evident at the local level and on statewide ballot propositions."

(J. E. Gregg, "Newspaper Editorial Endorsements and California Elections, 1948-62." Journalism Quarterly, 42:532-38 Autumn, 1965).

Oregon Editor Influenced Election Results for 25 Years

In 562 primary and general election contests between 1928 and 1952, the late William M. Tugman, editor of the Eugene (Ore.) Register-Guard, gave advice to voters.

His recommendations of candidates and issues were made either in editorials or in a summary of endorsements. His newspaper was Republican in policy and the editorials could usually be characterized as "strong."

Paul Bluemle analyzed the election results to determine the extent of Tugman's influence. His method was to compare the Lane County vote percentages on issues and candidates with the state percentages, after correcting for differences in state and county registration. These percentages were further adjusted by comparing county and state voting in contests in which the editor had made no recommendations. Not included in the analysis were contests in which a candidate was a Lane County "favorite son."

By this "more favorable percentage" measure, it was found that the editor's average influence over the 25 year period was 3.42%, broken down as follows:

General elections	4.2%
Primaries	2.7
Issues	3.8
Candidates	3.4

In eleven close contests, the margin, which it can be assumed Tugman provided, was enough to be the crucial margin of victory for the candidate or issue.

Tugman's recommendations were approved in Lane County 80.6% of the time. "Democrats, non-incumbents and favorite sons had a mathematically better chance of winning when they had his recommendation than when they did not."

The recommendations were somewhat more effective in local than in state elections. They were also more effective in Democratic than in Republican primaries. (Tugman made recommendations in 70% of the Republican and 53% of the Democratic primaries.)

Over the years, the "more favorable percentage" average declined steadily. The author attributes this decline to "other factors" which cannot be "isolated statistically."

However, the percentage of times that the editor's candidates won in local elections increased over the years.

(Paul E. Bluemle, The Effect of the Editorial Recommendations of William M. Tugman . . . on the Voting Results in Lane County, Oregon . . . 1928-1952. Master's thesis, University of Oregon, 1953.)

Racial Identification in the News

An experiment suggests that identification of Negroes in the news may be less harmful to Negroes than has been asserted by objectors to the practice.

Carter presented to 142 students of news writing in three southern and two northern universities a data sheet of "facts" about an imaginary crime in which the suspect had been charged with burglary and rape. Each student wrote a news story based on the "facts."

Some of the "facts" were that the suspect had broken into a woman's apartment, had held a knife to her throat and had assaulted her; also that the arrested suspect fitted the description of a suspect who had recently committed a similar crime; that the suspect was illiterate, lazy, had an harmonica in his pocket and similar facts which were considered by some persons to be stereotypes of the Negro.

One version of the data sheet said the suspect was a Negro and the other did not say. The students from both regions were divided into matched groups.

After a student had written a news story he filled in a questionnaire in which were "buried" certain questions designed to test his prejudice.

Carter found that, in both regions, the students who had written about the Negro were significantly less sure of the suspect's guilt in connection with either the present or the previous crime than students who had written the "white" version.

The accompanying table exhibits the combined mean guilt scores for the present offense and the previous offense. The scale ranged from 0 (innocent) to 6 (guilty).

Southern students:		**Northern students:**	
Negro suspect	3.36	Negro suspect	2.76
White suspect	3.92	White suspect	3.76

Combined group:	
Negro suspect	3.18
White suspect	3.87

Southern students who wrote about the Negro suspect made slightly more use of the stereotype "facts" in the data sheet than did their classmates who wrote about a white man.

Northern students who wrote about the Negro suspect made slightly less use of the stereotype "facts" than their classmates who wrote the "white" version.

Carter concluded that the stereotype content in the data sheet had no significant effect on the students' ascription of guilt or innocence.

He speculates that two other factors could explain the "break" given to the Negro suspect. These are:

1. A general awareness by the students of journalism of the legal principle which holds that a man is innocent until he is proved guilty.
2. Some impression to the effect that a colored crime suspect might not always receive fair and unprejudiced treatment in a court.

The author adds:

"Little is known about the cumulative effect of 'race labeling' practices upon newspaper audiences, but the results of the racial news experiments suggest that the gain to be made from Negro identification in the case of favorable stories might actually be greater than any harm done by the same practice in stories of crime or violence.

"In short, the author would hazard a guess to the effect that Negro leaders might profitably place more emphasis upon obtaining **constructive** publicity (perhaps with identification by race) about the praiseworthy achievements of members of the Negro community."

(Roy E. Carter, Jr., "Racial Identification Effects Upon the News Writer," Journalism Quarterly, 36:280-290, 1959.)

Slanting News Stories: Three Experiments

When journalism students, in an experiment, were told to write a news story about the second Nixon-Kennedy debate (1960) for a newspaper which favored Nixon, a few more of those who were anti-Nixon wrote a more one-sided story favoring Nixon than did those who were pro-Nixon.

When students were told to write a story based on biased facts they slanted the story in accordance with the facts rather than in accordance with their own biases.

Kerrick and associates conducted an experiment with thirty journalism students in which the students listened to a tape recording of the second Nixon-Kennedy debate and then wrote a news story for a paper which supported Nixon.

Several weeks earlier the students' attitudes had been tested: one-half were favorable and one-half were unfavorable to Nixon.

Each statement used in the news stories was categorized as being pro-Nixon, anti-Nixon or neutral.

As Table 1 shows, both groups used approximately the same number of statements favorable to Nixon, many more being pro-Nixon than anti-Nixon. However, pro-Nixon students used a few more statements that were unfavorable to Nixon than did those who were anti-Nixon.

Table 1

Writer's Attitude	Pro-Nixon Statements Used	Anti-Nixon Statements Used	Neutral Statements Used	Total
Pro-Nixon	41.8%	28.3%	29.9%	100%
Anti-Nixon	42.2	23.3	34.5	100

The findings seem to show that students whose own attitudes do not correspond to the policy of a newspaper try to conform to the policy.

Comment: This finding appears to confirm the complaint of some editors that they have difficulty in getting some of their reporters to refrain from writing news in conformance with, or supposedly in conformance with, editorial policy as perceived by the reporters.

Kerrick and associates conducted a second experiment with a different group in which journalism students with pro-labor union and anti-labor union attitudes were asked to write stories based on a "balanced" fact sheet; i.e., one in which the number of favorable and unfavorable statements were equal.

The pro-union students used more statements favorable to the Teamsters' union and fewer statements unfavorable to the union than did the anti-union students (Table 2). Thus, the writers' performances were consistent with their own attitudes when editorial policy was not a consideration.

Table 2

Writer's Attitude	Pro-Union Statements Used	Anti-Union Statements Used	Neutral Statements Used	Total
Pro-Union	36.3%	15.5%	48.2%	100%
Anti-Union	29.7	20.0	50.3	100

In a third experiment, only pro-union students were asked to write news stories from two biased fact sheets—one sheet pro-union, the other anti-union.

As Table 3 shows, when the majority of facts in the fact sheet were pro-union the students used more pro-union facts; when the majority of facts were anti-union the students used more anti-union facts.

The data in Table 3 also show that students tend to use more facts which conflict with their own attitudes, than facts which support their attitudes.

Table 3

Majority of Facts in Fact Sheets	Pro-union Statements Used	Anti-union Statements Used	Neutral Statements Used	Total
Pro-union	32.9%	21.3%	45.8%	100%
Anti-union	8.1	48.8	43.1	100

Since students in news writing courses are admonished to write objectively, there is some reason for inferring that findings in these experiments would be replicated in a situation in which experienced newsmen would be subjects.

However, facts used in the experiments were supplied for the subjects. This is not the same situation as when a reporter himself seeks the facts. The experiments do not tell us whether the reporter would seek to learn facts that are consistent with his own biases or with his newspaper's policy when the newspaper has a policy.

(J. S. Kerrick, T. E. Anderson and L. B. Swales, "Balance and the Writer's Attitude in News Stories and Editorials," Journalism Quarterly, 41:207-215, 1964.)

A Semi-Rural Public Looks at the Newspaper's Leadership Role

Edelstein and Contris studied the leadership role of the weekly newspaper in a conservative Washington community they called "Grangeville". The town, located about thirty miles from Seattle, has a population of 3,600 and serves an additional 6,500 persons as a trade center.

A probability sample was used for the city and the rural countryside. The area had a higher than average proportion of elderly persons.

One series of questions concerned the weekly newspaper's "watchdog" role. These results are in Table 1.

A second series of questions related to the newspaper's responsibility for exposing graft and corruption. The results are in Table 2.

A third series of questions related to the weekly newspaper's responsibility for publicizing lawbreaking. The results are in Table 3.

The sample of readers was also asked about the newspaper's role in offering editorial comment on fluoridation. The results are in Table 4.

The researchers also interviewed a panel of forty-six leaders in the community. Table 5 contrasts the primary sources of information of these leaders and of the general public.

The data from a study of the leadership role of a daily newspaper published in an urban community could vary considerably from the data published here.

TABLE 1

The newspaper has the duty to check on the project to see that the money is being properly spent	52.4%
The newspaper has the right to check on the project but it is not its duty to do so	38.5
There is no need at all for a newspaper to check on such projects. That's the job of others	7.7
Newspapers should be prevented from interfering in a situation like this	1.0
Don't know	0.5

TABLE 2

The weekly newspaper should be the first to discover graft and corruption	25.0%
The weekly newspaper does not have the responsibility for discovering graft but it should disclose the facts	68.3
The newspaper does not have to print such stories if it does not want to	6.7

TABLE 3

The Record should publish any lawbreaking—big or small	51.4%
The Record should use its discretion—it should give publicity to some violations of the law but not to others	28.8
Such things are not the concern of the weekly newspaper	17.8
Don't know	1.9

TABLE 4

Has the duty to advise readers how to vote on such issues	18.7%
Has the right but not the duty	32.2
Should not advise	49.0

TABLE 5

	Leaders	Population
Family, friends, neighbors	13.0%	22.3%
At work, business, meetings	56.5	13.7
The local newspaper	30.4	58.2

(A. S. Edelstein and J. J. Contris, "The Public View of the Weekly Newspaper's Leadership Role," Journalism Quarterly, 43:17-24, 1966.)

To Print or Not To Print?

Edelstein and Contris studied the leadership role of the weekly newspaper in a conservative Washington community they called "Grangeville". The town, located about thirty miles from Seattle, has a population of 3,600 and serves an additional 6,500 persons as a trade center.

A probability sample was used for the city and the rural countryside. The area had a higher than average proportion of elderly persons.

One series of questions asked whether or not the weekly newspaper should publish certain kinds of news stories. The results were as follows:

Types of stories	Always	Sometimes	Never
Names of juvenile delinquents	22.6%	17.8%	59.6%
Who is getting a divorce	6.7	13.9	79.3
Why couples are getting a divorce	5.3	27.4	66.8
Names of accused speeders, drunk drivers, etc. . . . for the first time	18.7	20.2	60.6
Names of accused speeders, drunk drivers, etc . . . for the second or third time	50.9	36.1	12.5
Stories critical of the City Council	41.8	48.6	9.6
Criticism of individual members of the City Council	22.1	42.8	34.6

(The don't know responses are omitted from this table.)

The researchers speculated there would be higher approval for printing the names of juvenile delinquents in an urban community "where there is more awareness of delinquency, more social distance between an adult and a given juvenile and where the causes and outcomes of delinquency are seen as more severe and hence threatening."

We have no similar study in an urban community.

(A. S. Edelstein and J. J. Contris, "The Public View of the Weekly Newspaper's Leadership Role," Journalism Quarterly, 43:17-24, 1966.)

Chapter 9

FREE PRESS AND FAIR TRIAL

Confession Induces Belief in Guilt; Criminal Record and Evidence Do Not

Wilcox and McCombs, of the University of California at Los Angeles, conducted an experiment last spring to test whether certain kinds of pretrial publicity could influence potential jurors.

The subjects were 120 registered male and female voters in the 26th Congressional district in Los Angeles, most of whom were in their twenties and thirties and had a high school education.

The subjects were presented with the first page of a specially printed tabloid-size newspaper, containing several news stories, and were asked to read it. Next they were asked a series of questions about the several news stories and also questions about their attitudes toward smog control, the Ku Klux Klan and the murder investigation reported in the newspaper.

The headline and lead of the murder story were as follows:

> **POLICE ARREST**
> **KILLING SUSPECT**
>
> A farm equipment mechanic was arrested today on suspicion of murder in the August slaying of a Pasadena City College teacher, his wife, and their two young daughters.
>
> Blaine L. Watkins, 33, first arrested on a burglary charge but soon cleared, is being investigated in connection with the murder of Buell L. Cranston, 29, his wife Rose, also 29, and their two daughters, Sherry, 6, and Diane, 4.

Eight versions of the newspaper were printed, some of which included mention of the suspect's criminal record (served two years in a state prison for burglary), a report of the police evidence and a statement by the police that the suspect had confessed.

Each of the eight groups was presented with a different version. The eight versions were:

1. No mention of confession, record or evidence
2. Confession
3. Criminal record
4. Evidence
5. Confession and criminal record
6. Confession and evidence
7. Criminal record and evidence
8. Confession, criminal record and evidence

All of the subjects were asked to mark on a scale the extent of their agreement or disagreement with this statement: "The suspect Watkins is guilty of the crime."

The main findings were:

1. Among subjects exposed or not exposed to information about police evidence, there was no significant difference in belief in guilt.

2. Nor was there any significant difference as to belief in guilt between the subjects who were and were not exposed to the subject's criminal record.

3. There was, however, a significant difference in belief in guilt as the result of exposure to the police report of a confession; that is, exposure to versions 2, 5, 6 and 8.

Belief in guilt was measured on a 100-point scale. Thirty-one per cent of the subjects checked the midpoint of the scale (50), which is a "don't know" kind of response. If this had been a verbal scale, the belief in guilt scores would probably have been as follows: "Guilty" and "probably guilty" combined, 44%; "not guilty" and "probably not guilty" combined, 25%; "don't know", 31%.

Respondents were also asked: "Please tell me about the murder as you remember it." Their recall of the facts was coded in terms of its "accuracy." Thus, those responses which mentioned that the facts were attributed to official sources, those which included such qualifying phrases as "alleged," and "charged with" and those which explicitly referred to Watkins as (only) a suspect were coded as "accurate."

Forty-four per cent of the respondents who used any one or more or some combination of the foregoing terms were classified as "accurate" respondents.

Respondents who explicitly described Watkins as committing the murder were classified as "inaccurate" (24%). The remaining 32% of the subjects used none of the "accurate" terms and did not explicitly describe Watkins as either a suspect or a murderer.

A statistical analysis of these responses shows that the more "inaccurate"—the recall the greater the belief in guilt, and the more "accurate" the recall the less the belief in guilt. This is shown in the following table:

Belief in guilt:	High	Intermediate	Low	Sum
Accurate	16	15	21	52
Intermediate	19	12	7	38
Inaccurate	17	10	1	28
	52	37	29	118

It is possible that the findings about recall represent the way that people read their newspaper and evaluate a crime story.

(W. Wilcox and M. E. McCombs, Unpublished MS.)

How "Readers" Evaluate Guilt in Crime Stories: An Experiment

When a newspaper reader reads the report of a crime which states that a suspect is being "questioned" does he at that time make a judgment as to the suspect's guilt or innocence, or does he suspend judgment?

An experiment to answer this and other questions was undertaken this year at the University of Wisconsin. It was reported in a senior thesis by Mary Dee Wenniger, who was supervised by Dr. Steven H. Chaffee.

The sample of "readers" was 150 members of various social and work groups (e.g., members of the PTA and League of Women Voters, steel workers' wives). It differs from juries mainly in being more educated and composed of more females.

Each subject was exposed to three brief, fictitious news stories which mentioned the name of a suspect. The stories reported a burglary, an assault-robbery and a kidnap-murder.

The basic story (which was read by all subjects) was neutral, although it named a suspect. The kidnap-murder story, for example, read as follows:

> KIDNAPED BABY
> IS FOUND DEAD
>
> The frozen body of two-year-old Debbie Brown, who was snatched from her crib a week ago, was found behind a warehouse on the south side of town Wednesday.
>
> Debbie's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Brown, 811 College Ave., received a telephone call supposedly from the kidnaper a day later. He demanded that they pay him $10,000 in ransom for the child "if you ever want to see her again."
>
> They placed the money in a bag in the place he directed, but the money was never picked up.
>
> The coroner said he thought the child was dead at the time of the call.
>
> An employee of Union Products found the body buried in the snow Wednesday when he was plowing off the company parking lot.
>
> He called police, who questioned all employees who were in the area at the time of the kidnaping.
>
> A warehouse worker, Jack Chase, 25, 812 Main st., was detained for more intensive questioning.

Paragraphs were added to the basic story in various combinations that were presumed to be favorable or damaging to the suspect. The versions were systematically varied so that the subjects read different versions. The additions were as follows:

Arrest: Chase was later arrested and charged with the kidnaping and first degree murder.

D.A.'s Statement: District Attorney Mark Nelson said, "There's no doubt that Chase is our man. We have an airtight case against him."

Suspect's confession: Chase has confessed to the crime, police said.

Arrest: Chase was not held.

D.A.'s statement: District Attorney Mark Nelson said, "We're not at all sure that Chase is our man, and are continuing to question suspects."

Suspect's statement: Chase has denied the crime and asked for a lie detector test.

Some versions of the story included only one of the additional statements and other versions included two or three. Altogther, 15 versions were tested in different combinations.

Subjects could either express no opinion or could evaluate the suspect's guilt or innocence on a scale ranging from 0 to 7 (7 being innocent and 3.5 being the midpoint).

In 43 per cent of the cases, subjects chose to express no opinion.

The percentage of cases in which subjects made a judgment as to guilt or innocence ranged from 48 per cent when there was one "positive" statement (e.g., "Chase was not held") to 76 per cent when there were three "negative" statements (e.g., "Chase has confessed, police said").

For the "neutral" basic stories for all three crimes (which included the statement that a suspect was being questioned), the average score was 2.5—well toward the guilty end of the scale.

For all "negative" versions, the average score was 2.2—not very different from the score for the basic story.

For all "positive" versions, the average score was 4.8.

The statement most damaging to a suspect was the suspect's confession.

The statement of arrest was also very damaging.

The most beneficial to the suspect of all of the statements was the one that he had not been arrested.

Opinions by the district attorney—both "positive" and "negative"—and the suspect's denial of the crime had less effect.

The following hypotheses were substantiated:

1. Willingness to express an opinion is positively related to the amount of information given.

2. Prejudgment of guilt is affected by the amount and value of the information given.

3. While the effects vary for different demographic groups, they are valid to some degree regardless of the reader's sex, age, occupation, education or previous court

contact. Subjects who had been in court (juror, party) were more sensitive to the amount of information in their frequency of judgments of guilt and less influenced by the character of the information. This suggests that in a jury situation they might not be so amenable to effects of pretrial publicity as the experiment itself indicates.

(Mary Dee Wenniger, Pretrial Publicity and Juror Prejudice, senior thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1966)

"Murder, Juries, and the Press"

"The dangers of pretrial publicity have been exaggerated."

A University of Illinois sociologist recruited 97 subjects for an experiment she conducted in two phases.

She wrote every fortieth registered voter in Champaign and Urbana (825 voters) of whom 97 were willing to cooperate. Two-thirds of them were college educated.

She prepared two accounts of a fictional Chicago murder. These were news stories for three successive days. One version, called "conservative," was a "sober" account; the other, called "sensational," reported "gory details."

The headlines were as follows:

Conservative	Sensational
Young Chicago Woman Killed in Apartment	Woman Slashed to Death In Apartment
Two Arrested in Socialite Murder Case	Cops Nab Two for Hyde Knife Slaying
New Evidence Revealed In Hyde Case	Knife Discovered In Murderers' Rooms

Defendants were "Fred Kessler" and "Bill Anderson". The first sensational news story reported that Kessler had "a long standing criminal record". The second sensational story mentioned that Kessler had been released from Joliet prison in 1957. In the third sensational story, every mention of Kessler's name was preceded by the word "ex-convict."

The researcher did not report the content of the conservative story.

Nor did the news stories say anything about Anderson except that he was a co-defendant, according to the report of the experiment.

When the subjects assembled, 51 of them were asked to read the sensational versions and 56, the conservative versions. The subjects then balloted as to guilt or innocence.

The second phase of the experiment was a mock trial in which the same subjects acted as jurors. They listened to a tape recording which consisted of (a) the attorneys' opening statements; (b) the testimony of three witnesses for the prosecution and four for the defendants; (c) the closing summations of the attorneys, and (d) the judge's instructions.

Inasmuch as Kessler did not testify the evidence of his criminal record was not admitted. We are not told anything else about the nature of the testimony.

In his instructions at the conclusion of the trial the judge stated that if the defendants were found guilty, they would receive the death sentence.

Prior to the trial the judge admonished the "jury" to lay aside any opinions they may have formed and to base their verdict only on evidence presented at the trial—"not on the speculations of newspapers."

The jurors balloted without engaging in any discussion.

Opinions of the subjects are exhibited in the following table. The first three columns show percentages for guilt and innocence based on the reading of the news stories; the last three columns show the percentages based on the mock trial.

	NEWS STORIES			MOCK TRIAL		
	Guilty	Not Guilty	No Opinion	Guilty	Not Guilty	No Opinion
Exposed to:						
Sensational:						
Kessler	67%	21%	12%	25%	73%	2%
Anderson	53	33	14	25	73	2
Conservative:						
Kessler	37	39	24	22	78	0
Anderson	37	39	24	22	78	0

If we disregard the data about the subjects who read the sensational versions (since those news stories and headlines do not entirely correspond to reality) and observe the data about those who read the conservative versions, we can see what happened.

The following table presents the data about Kessler (only) in actual numbers of subjects rather than percentages.

NEWS STORIES			MOCK TRIAL		
Guilty	Not Guilty	No Opinion	Guilty	Not Guilty	No Opinion
21	22	13	12	44	0

The table shows that all 13 subjects who had suspended judgment after reading the conservative versions apparently voted "not guilty"; and that nine of the 21 subjects who had earlier thought Kessler was guilty apparently shifted to a "not guilty" decision. No data were reported, however, as to which subjects shifted.

The conclusions of the experimenter were:

1. Many subjects ("readers") changed their minds after participating as jurors.
2. Trial jurors who had read the conservative account did not differentiate the two defendants.
3. People are influenced by what they read and sensational news coverage has more influence than more sober accounts.
4. The dangers of pretrial publicity have been exaggerated.

"How 'Readers' Evaluate Guilt in Crime Stories," (p. 97) shows that almost one-half of the readers (43%) suspended judgment after reading about the crime reported in that experiment. Both of those experiments tell us something about the way readers evaluate a crime story.

Both of the experiments reported previously suggest that in an actual jury situation jurors are not as amenable to the effects of pretrial publicity as some lawyers believe. Those experiments agree with the experiment reported here that "the dangers of pretrial publicity have been exaggerated."

(Rita James Simon, "Murder, Juries, and the Press," Transaction, May-June, 1966)

Chapter 10

MISCELLANEOUS

Basic Tendencies of Eye Movement

> Brandt found a tendency for the initial exploratory fixation to be at a point above and to the left of the center of a layout and for subsequent exploratory movements to be leftward and then clockwise.

In the 1930s, Professor Herman F. Brandt developed a bidimensional eye camera; that is, one that photographed on a single film both the horizontal and vertical eye movements of a subject who read or looked at graphic matter on a rack.

The rack was large enough (about 21 × 14 inches) to accommodate a double-page standard-size magazine spread (e.g., Life, Look).

Brandt's work was supported financially by Cowles Magazines, Inc. and many of his experiments were of magazine ads and editorial matter. He tested more than 2,500 subjects.

The eye does not glide along a line of print or over a picture, but covers the area by jumps and stops. (See page 67.) On the average, the duration of a fixation is about one-fourth of a second.

Figs. 1, 2 and 3 illustrate some of Brandt's findings.

1. There is a tendency for the initial exploratory fixation to be at a point above and to the left of the center of the observed field (e.g., a magazine layout). In Fig. 1 the black circle is the approximate "primary area fixation" on a two-page magazine spread.

2. Fig. 2 shows the first three exploratory movements the eyes make after the initial fixation. The arrows indicate both the centers of fixation and the direction of each eye movement. The movements are to be left and upward.

One possible explanation for the left and upward movements is that children are trained to read from left to right when beginning the first line of print. This habit, it is thought, predisposes adults to this.

It has also been postulated that in a right-handed person the left side of the brain dominates because the left hemisphere of the brain controls the right side of the body.

3. Fig. 3 illustrates a tendency for the eyes to move in a clockwise manner in their first exploratory journey over a

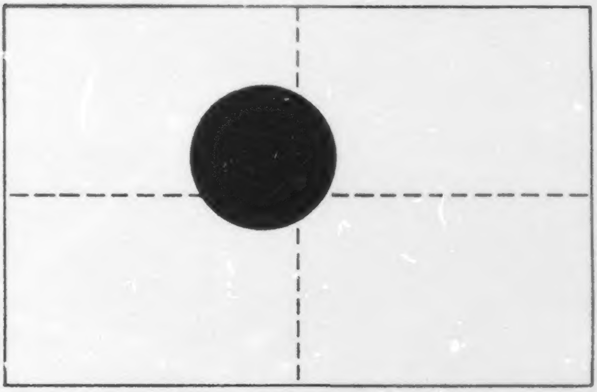

Fig. 1

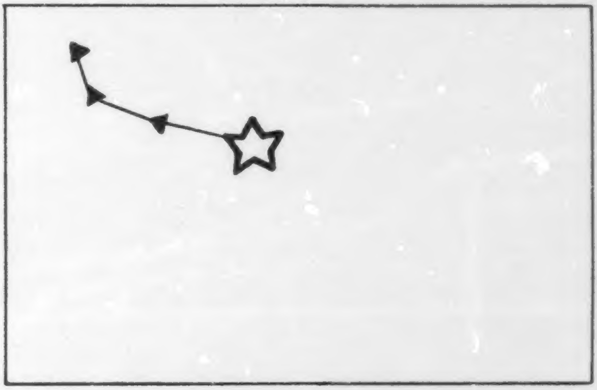

Fig. 2

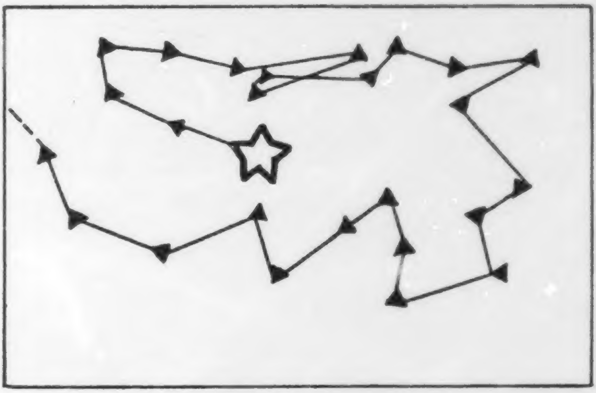

Fig. 3

new layout area. The eyes rarely make more than four successive movements in the same direction. This is true for many different kinds of layouts.

However, it is possible to inhibit this natural flow of movement by making a certain kind of layout. Thus, a vertical kind of makeup could interfere with the natural horizontal movement.

4. There is a tendency for the eye to prefer the upper part of a layout. Thus, a controlled experiment found that the proportion of time spent on the four quarters of the layout were as follows: upper left 41%, upper right 20% (total 61%), lower left 25% and lower right 14% (total 39%).

5. Pictures in the center of a layout (of pictures) have some advantage over pictures in the outside positions. One experiment, in which the position of the pictures was reversed, showed that 57% of the total time was spent on pictures in the inside positions as compared with 43% devoted to the same pictures in the outside positions.

Using the same layout and controlling in the same way, Brandt found that men spent 57% of the total time looking at the pictures of women and 43% looking at pictures of men; whereas women spent 47.5% of the total time looking at men and 52.5% looking at women.

6. White space increases attention time when it is 25% of the total area. Brandt did not test for a smaller proportion.

Brandt reported no experiments with the newspaper—except some individual newspaper ads. No useful eye camera studies of a standard-size newspaper have been reported. However, a reliable and useful study of the ads in a tabloid-size paper was reported by Leo Bogart ("How Do People Read Their Newspapers?", Media/scope, Jan., 1962).

The individual makeup editor who accepts Brandt's findings as being relevant to the newspaper might ask himself whether his decisions about display correspond to the readers' natural eye movements or interfere with them.

(H. F. Brandt, The Psychology of Seeing, 1945.)

Lighting Angle in Pictures Makes Persons Appear Favorable

Tannenbaum and Fosdick obtained experimental subjects' judgments of four photographic models under four different lighting angle conditions.

The models were a young woman, an older man, an older woman, and a young man. The lighting conditions were: 1. Flat; 2. With light at the camera; 3. Above and 4. 45 degree lateral angle to the camera-subject axis.

Experimental subjects were asked to evaluate the camera subjects (the models), not the photograph per se. The experimental subjects checked these seven "evaluative" scales: good/bad, happy/sad, pleasant/unpleasant, guilty/innocent, kind/cruel, honest/dishonest and dirty/clean.

The experiment was conducted under very rigorous control conditions which are not described in this summary. (Copies of the prints may be obtained from the authors at the University of Wisconsin).

The conclusion was that the 45 degree side angle generally makes the camera subject appear more favorable than do any of the other lighting conditions.

This finding confirms what several of the leading writers on photographic lighting have prescribed (e. g., John S. Carroll, Graphic Graflex Photography; Don Mohler in Joseph Costa, editor, The Complete Book of Press Photography; and Miller and Brummitt, This is Photography.)

(P. H. Tannenbaum and J. A. Fosdick, "The Effect of Lighting Angle on the Judgment of Photographic Subjects, Audio-Visual Communications Review, 8:253-262, 1960)

"Writing Captions for Newspictures"

An eight-page booklet titled "Writing Captions for Newspictures" prepared by Dr. Chilton R. Bush is available on request to members, press associations, and Schools of Journalism. The booklet deals with an eye camera study to find out how people look at newspictures and read cutlines. The study is part of a continuing consideration by the ANPA and other newspaper organizations of the need for service to newspapers on the general subject of research pertaining to news-editorial operations of newspapers and press services.

Extra copies may be obtained.

The Public Evaluates its Newspaper

Using the standardized test developed at Stanford University to measure the public's attitude toward its newspaper, Dr. Robert M. Pockrass, of Pennsylvania State University, tested readers of the Sharon (Pa.) Herald in October 1965.

More than 91% of the readers had lived in the Shanango Valley for more than ten years. The newspaper is generally Republican in policy, but supported Johnson in 1964.

The test consists of 50 questions which measure 12 different attitudinal dimensions and six questions which measure general satisfaction with the newspaper.

The scores for the Herald were about the same as have been obtained for other newspapers.

The least favorable answer to a question is scored as (1) and the most favorable as (5). A neutral answer is scored as (3). All questions higher than (3), therefore, are favorable.

Most of the questions which measure the 12 attitudinal dimensions and general satisfaction will be found in Chapter 2 of "News Research for Better Newspapers" (1966). The complete list is in Brinton, Bush and Newell, "The Newspaper and Its Public." Chapter 2 also reports the evaluation of a newspaper by its employees.

Here are the Herald's scores for each dimension and for general satisfaction:

4.24	Racial and Religious Fairness
4.07	GENERAL SATISFACTION
3.91	Adequacy of News Content
3.69	Morally Objectionable Content
3.67	Authoritarianism
3.66	Responsibility for Advertising Content
3.59	Check on Government
3.55	Responsibility for Accuracy
3.52	**Average Score for All Dimensions**
3.36	Political and Economic Fairness
3.35	Human Worth and Dignity
3.00	Representativeness
2.93	Confidence in Political Leadership
2.81	Independence From Pressure

It will be noted that the score for general satisfaction with this newspaper is higher than for the average of all of the 12 dimensions. Since we do not know how much weight readers assign to each dimension it is possible that some of the dimensions (e.g., "Adequacy of News Content") and certain utility factors (e.g., delivery service and practical guidance content) contribute to general satisfaction.

The main value of the test is to tell the publisher the particular dimensions in which the paper is perceived by the readers as being strong or weak.

When is Repetition Justifiable?

A California newspaper has adopted a very attractive style for cutlines for news pictures that accompany a news story. The style calls for an 18-pt. boldface line underneath the picture (3 or 4 columns), below that line an identification sentence in 9-pt. bold face, and below that a 30-pt. headline of 3 or 4 columns, sometimes with a kicker head added.

When the news story has only one news element this usually means that the fact or idea is expressed as often as four times in the cutlines, headline and lead.

When the story has two or more news elements the amount of repetition, of course, is reduced; the cutline style fits that situation very well.

But when the story has only one news element, the cutline writer follows the style out of the window; no matter how long he sucks his thumb he has to resort to repetition to comply with the style.

The question has been asked whether this repetition is desirable. ANPA News Research bulletins try not to referee such questions, for they call for editorial judgment. The only purpose of the bulletins is to present objective evidence when it is available to assist editors in making their own judgments.

"Information Theory"

There is some scientific theory, however, about repetition. The theory suggests that in some circumstances, repetition of facts and ideas is desirable for facilitating comprehension—as distinguished from repetition of words or phrases that make a literary composition monotonous for the reader's ear.

Called "information theory," it was developed by communication engineers who are concerned with electronic data transmission and similar problems begotten in the computer age. It is a mathematics which answers the question, "What is the probability that a message will be comprehended?"

Or put another way, "What is the probability that the decoder of a message is receiving the same symbols that the encoder sent or intended to send?"

The mathematical formulas show that the more **redundant** is the message the greater is the probability that it will be comprehended. The encoder tries to maximize the probability—i.e., reduce the ambiguity—by repetition.

These formulas are important to electrical engineers because of "channel noise." If parts of the message are lost —because of "noise"—the message can yet be intelligible if the message is sufficiently redundant. This is because the redundancy provides enough contextual clues for the decoder to supply the "missing" parts of the message.

Perhaps there is an analogy to news writing here because the distracting and time-limiting conditions under which a newspaper is read by many persons can be thought of as "channel noise."

If this theory were applied to news writing—as it often is to public speaking—some news stories might be more easily comprehended because they would be more redundant. Here is an example quoted from a textbook:

An Example

> An excellent example of how repetition increases the probability that the communication will be understood is a news story by James Marlow, of the Associated Press Washington bureau, about the expected arrival in the United States on October 30, 1948, of 813 displaced persons from Europe. The following facts were pertinent: (1) there were then in Europe 750,000 persons who had been classified as "DPs"; (2) the special law passed by the United States Congress permitted the admission of a total of 205,000 (these being in addition to those who were admitted under the existing law which regulated admission of aliens by annual quotas from various countries); (3) only 40,000 DPs had previously been admitted under the existing law; and (4) 22 per cent of all DPs are Jews.
>
> The writer repeated fact (1) four times, fact (2) four times, fact (3) five times, fact (4) twice, and the fact that 813 DPs were due to arrive "tomorrow" three times.
>
> Why so much repetition? The writer was aware of the possibility that some readers would interpret the statistics to mean, perhaps, that 750,000 DPs were arriving, or that 205,000 European Jews were admitted every year under the existing law, and so forth.

To summarize the foregoing discussion: repetition of facts and ideas to facilitate comprehension is not the same as repetition of words and phrases that are unpleasant to the reader because they make for monotony. Repetition of facts and ideas can make communication more efficient when the story has several news elements that could confuse the hurried reader.

This concept has very little relevance for literary style. It seems to have no relevance for repetition in headlines and cutlines in situations in which repetition is not needed to facilitate comprehension.

(C. E. Shannon and W. Weaver, The Mathematical Theory of Communication, 1949)

Names in the News

Whose name gets in the newspaper and in what role?

A study in 1951-52 classified 90.3% of the names of local residents whose names appeared in the San Francisco Examiner and 85.7% of those whose names appeared in the Monterey (Calif.) Peninsula Herald (circulation then 13,000), using ten week-day issues (exclusive of Saturday) staggered systematically over a five-month period. A name was counted only once in a news story.

Women accounted for only 15% of the names in the Examiner and only 18.6% in the Herald. Almost 90% of the names were of adults between the ages of 26 and 64 years.

The names were divided into three occupational classes. The surest way for a person in the A or B (highest) classes to have his name in either of the papers was to be quoted in a speech, statement or report. The surest way for a person in the lowest (C) class to have his name in the Examiner was to be a participant in a police or court action, and in the Herald to be a surviving victim of an accident, illness or other misfortune. The other roles are exhibited in Table 1.

Table 2, which shows the occupations of local persons in the news, reveals some differences between the two sizes of newspapers.

The doctor, in his professional role, appeared only once in the Examiner and not at all in the Herald. The relatively large proportion of names of military personnel in the Herald is accounted for by the fact that a large military base adjoins Monterey.

A classification was made of the acts of persons in the news as to whether the acts were of the kind that evoke social approval or disapproval. More than one-half of all acts reported were classified as "non-value" acts and 10 to 13 per cent were acts which evoke a divergent reaction in various members of society. A panel of judges determined the borderline cases. Here are the findings:

	Examiner	Herald
Socially approved acts	25.6%	31.0%
Socially disapproved acts	10.4	3.6

The names were also classified as to whether the news story presented the persons as being "strong," "weak," or "neutral." The "strong" designation included situations in which the person received recognition, exerted moral influence or appeared as a leader, teacher or arbiter. The "weak" designation was applied to persons in various kinds of distress, such as being accused as an offender, dying, being wounded and being the victim of an accident. Here are the findings:

	Examiner	Herald
"Strong"	41.7%	41.8%
"Weak"	21.1	12.6
"Neutral"	37.2	45.6

Persons were also classified as to whether they were acting for themselves, as agent or spokesman for others or in a passive role. The findings:

	Examiner	Herald
Acted for self	39.0%	46.2%
Agent, spokesman	48.2	39.6
In passive role	12.8	14.2

Table 1

	Examiner	Herald
Quoted	23.9%	21.0%
Participated in police or court action	19.3	6.0
Appointed, promoted, honored	12.2	15.5
Attended, arrived, departed	8.1	14.7
Victim of accident	5.9	6.6
Died	2.7	1.3
Participated in politics	2.2	1.3
Performed, entertained	1.4	4.1
Participated in military action	0.1	2.3
Mentioned: no action	13.0	12.2
Miscellaneous acts	11.2	13.7

Table 2

Proprietors, managers	17.2%	9.6%
Lawyers	10.2	3.3
Secretaries, clerks, salesmen	7.6	7.0
Judges	4.8	2.3
Mayors	3.0	3.2
Police, fire chiefs	1.0	2.0
Policemen, firemen	4.8	2.0
Other government officers	7.2	6.7
Military officers	3.0	4.0
Union agents	4.1	0.6
Performers, artists, authors	2.1	5.6
Doctors	2.4	3.0
Accountants, agents	3.0	4.9
Social workers	1.8	0.7
Other professionals	6.7	12.7
Soldiers, sailors	3.4	7.6
Professional criminals	1.8	0.3
Manual workers	6.7	13.4
Miscellaneous	9.2	11.0

(Bush and Bullock, "Names in the News: A Study of Two Dailies," Journalism Quarterly, 28: 148-157, 1952).

Fewer "Good" Employees Available Now

One of the questions asked in a survey conducted jointly last November and December by ASNE's Committee of the Editorial Future (headed by Norman E. Isaacs, of the Louisville (Ky.) Courier-Journal and Times) and the Newspaper Personnel Relations Association (led by Gene Lambert, of the St. Paul (Minn.) Dispatch-Pioneer Press) was: "Are you experiencing more difficulty in obtaining good people in these various categories (listed) now than you did two years ago?"

Responses are broken down by "smaller" and "larger" newspapers. A "smaller" paper was one with fewer than 100 editorial employees.

Smaller Newspapers

	Yes	No	No Answer	Have Current Opening
Copy readers	39.8%	27.6%	32.6%	22.8%
Copy editors	47.1	26.0	26.9	25.3
Reporters	48.8	41.5	9.7	48.0
Specialty writers ...	13.8	31.7	54.5	4.9
Photographers	8.9	43.1	48.0	6.5
Artists	3.3	28.5	68.2	1.6

Larger Newspapers

Copy readers	61.7%	26.4%	11.9%	47.0%
Copy editors	61.7	29.4	8.9	32.3
Reporters	36.7	57.3	6.0	48.5
Specialty writers ...	29.4	47.0	23.6	17.6
Photographers	16.1	64.7	19.2	11.7
Artists	19.1	52.9	28.0	7.3

There seems to be a high relationship between the percentages in the "No answer" column and the "Have current opening" column.

Although the definition of "good people" may have varied from respondent to respondent, the question emphasizes the comparison between now and two years ago.

(A Survey Report on the Recruitment and Training of Editorial Department Employees)

High Questionnaire Returns From Writers of Letters to the Editor

One way by which a newspaper may get a certain kind of information from its readers is to send questionnaires to those who have just written letters to the editor.

This was done by the Boston (Mass.) Herald, on behalf of a Harvard professor, on two occasions in 1959. The two waves of questionnaires produced 92% and 98% returns from 162 persons who had written letters.

The questionnaire was accompanied by an individually-typed letter and was sent the same day the letter was received. A self-addressed postage free envelope was enclosed.

The letter, in part, was as follows:

> Dear Mr. Jones:
>
> This is to thank you for your recent letter to the editor and to invite your participation in a survey.
>
> The letters we get are very important to us. They tell us what our readers are thinking. Many bring new points of view or are so ably written as to contribute greatly to the editorial page. Though we haven't the space to print more than a fraction of the letters we get, all are read and help us to guide our thinking. . . .
>
> Could we ask you to fill out the accompanying questionnaire and to return it in the enclosed envelope as soon as conveniently possible? It would help us greatly.

Those who write letters to the editor do not, of course, constitute a cross-section of readers. They are, in general, higher educated and more conservative than the average reader. (For previous reports on readers who write to the editor see pages 103-104 of "News Research for Better Newspapers" (1966). The newspaper which uses such a list would, of course, exclude the obvious cranks.

But for certain kinds of information, the sample, although biased, would be efficient because of the high rate of return. In general, people who do not respond to mail questionnaires are (1) those who are the least interested in the particular subject and (2) those who are not desk-oriented. Thus, many manual workers and a considerable proportion of women exclude themselves from the sample.

The responses would be cumulated over a period of time. The length of the period would depend on the number of letters received.

It is possible that a newspaper could use this method to operate a certain kind of opinion poll. For such a purpose, it would be more reliable than publishing a questionnaire, which, in most cases, elicits responses only from readers who are intensely interested in the particular subject.

(Stanley C. Plog, "Explanations for a High Return Rate on Mail Questionnaires", Public Opinion Quarterly, 27:297-298, 1963.)